BS English

BASIC OF TECHNICAL ENGLISH

Course Code: 1425/9409/8504

Study Guide

Department of English
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY

BASICS OF TECHNICAL ENGLISH

(BS ENGLISH)

Course Code: 1425/9409/8504 **Units: 1–9**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANTITIES
ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
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FOREWORD

The BS English Programme is being offered by the Department of English of Allama Iqbal University for the students who are interested in the fields of linguistics and literature. This programme is exclusive in the sense that it will provide study guides for all the courses written especially for AIOU students to introduce the concepts in an effective and a simple manner. This course will help students to have knowledge of both linguistics and literature. Furthermore, it will be properly effective from the viewpoint of prospective students and researchers for future implementation in the classroom setting and/or research setting.

The BS English study guide aims to include all possible queries that students may have and gently stimulates their intellect to probe into further questions. The areas and ideas presented in each chapter are covered appropriately and accurately. The text is comprehensive and accessible to students without even having commendable prior knowledge of linguistics and literature. This course intends the professional development of the students in the fields of linguistics and literature using different handy styles adopted by the different course writers.

The BS English study guides are a powerful tool even for BS English tutors teaching in various regions focusing upon a uniform scheme of studies. Also, these courses will help tutors by providing adequate teaching material for responsible and independent teaching. All study guides strictly follow the standardized nine-unit sub-division of the course content for optimum understanding. The short introduction at the beginning provides an overview of the unit followed by achievable learning objectives. The study guides define difficult terms in the text and guide the students for accessible learning. The units are finally summed up in summary points and the assessment questions not only guide teachers and students but help to revise the content developed upon previously formed concepts. Moreover, it provides links and a list of the suggested readings for further inquiry of students.

In the end, I am happy to extend my gratitude to the course team chairman, course development coordinator, writer, reviewers, and editors for the development of the course. Any suggestions for the improvement in the course will be fondly welcomed by the Department of English.

Prof. Dr. Zia-Ul-Qayyaum
Vice-Chancellor

PREFACE

My dear students welcome to the BS English III: Basics of Technical English Course. Technical English is a course primarily designed keeping in view the needs of most of you who wish to develop your technical writing abilities in English to a professional level. It ensures your understanding of the basics of technical writing, the concepts and terminology specific to it, with confidence. Technical writing is defined as a specific writing meant for a specific audience that has specific needs. It is the process of conveying technical information through writing, speech, and the other mediums to a specific audience. Since it conveys useful information and implements specific actions, it is also defined as a practical enterprise that is basically audience-centered. Being practical it has its own importance in today's fast moving world where the ability to communicate both verbally and in writing is considered to be the most crucial skill: Knowing the basics of technical writing is essential, if one hopes to have a future in a technical field.

Every profession has its own specialized form of writing. Technical writers have the crucial job to plan, design, organize, write and edit many kinds of professional documents. The contents of this course have therefore been exclusively designed to cater to most of these job assignments. Through the course, you will also learn about a number of technical genres, for instance, technical reports, proposals, letters, memos, etc. along with the process involved in these kinds of writing. The course also provides guidance in the appropriate documentation of the sources used in the production of the above. 'Basics of Technical English' is a three credit hour course and comprises nine units. This book is very simple in its approach to vocabulary and style. There are nine chapters in the book and for this wholesome task of the book, the main authentic source utilized was 'Technical Report Writing Today' by Daniel G. Riordan.

Unit-1 introduces the basics of technical communication one needs to know to communicate effectively. The main purpose of technical communication is to assist users who need specific information on completing tasks, using products, operating equipment, and so on. To be more dynamic and user-oriented it also helps business in different ways. As technical communication is part of different spheres, keep in mind that technical communication is not expressive writing, journalistic writing, or creative literature. It does not use vague literary references. The language of technical communication is dry, clear and concise to help people get the main idea quickly. Prompting them to offer suitable courses and programs in technical communication is basically the main purpose of this unit.

Unit-2 gives an idea about technical writing application. It is all about understanding the audience design and it provides clarity about the expected knowledge level and role of the audience. At the same time, it tells about different applications of technical writing such as memos, formal and informal reports,

letters and proposals. After reading this unit dear students you will be able to recognize the similarities and differences between the feasibility report and recommendation reports.

Unit-3 is based on the Technical Communication Process. This unit will help you to understand the gathered information during the communicative process. You will know how to write appropriate words, phrases and clauses with coherent sentences. You will be able to format proposals effectively using components such as a title page, cover letter, table of contents, list of illustrations, abstract, introduction, discussion, conclusion/ recommendation and glossary.

Unit-4 is about technical communication style. Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to acquire the basics (basic) principles of technical writing. A technical writer must adhere to the basic technical writing principles to ensure their documentation is both legible and easily understood by their audience writing.

Unit-5 defines and explains the term 'researching'. The overall aim of this unit is to explain what we mean by 'research', consider the role of research, explore the theoretical considerations at the start of the research process and describe its stages and concepts. Upon completing this unit, you would be able to explore how data, information, knowledge and decision-making relate to the role of research. This unit will provide guidance on formulating and writing research questions or hypotheses and research objectives.

Unit-6 is about designing pages, it will help you, dear students, to understand the technicalities involved in designing the pages. You will comprehend the significance of visual feature to reveal contents.

Unit-7 takes into account how to create and use different visual aids for a greater impact of the technical presentations. Since technical writing is considered to be a specific kind of writing there is a specific process involved in writing a technical document. A visual aid supplements words with pictures, charts, graphs, or other visual information. They are important because they help the audience understand and remember, develop audience's interest, and act as reminders for the speaker. Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to understand the use of visuals in contributing to a document's overall purpose and at the same time you will learn to integrate visuals as supports or exemplifications of a document's text.

Unit-8 is about professional communication. This unit will help you to understand the fundamental concept of professional communication. The term professional communication refers to the various forms of speaking, listening, writing, and responding, carried out both in and beyond the workplace, whether in person or electronically. Upon completion of this unit you will be able to take a professional, formal and civil tone to make the best impression on your audience, whether its members be your colleagues, supervisors or customers.

Unit-9 is the last unit of this course. It will acquaint you with the concept of a writer-reader relationship and recognize the need for active participation from both writer and reader. Though people living in the age of technology do not need to learn business letter skills as E-mails have replaced business letters as the primary mode of communication in today's professional world, yet many formal situations are still best handled with business letters, whether they are sent on paper or as an attachment to an e-mail. This unit will also help you to practice interview skills either as an observer, an interviewer or an interviewee.

The Main Focused Areas of Pedagogy

The core of this course can be summarized in the following areas:

- Research Skills (using primary, library research and internet sources to discover and employ information and correspondence Skills);
- Professional Writing Skills (disseminating information; to inform and persuade public audiences that organizations communicate to disseminate technical information to either non-technical or technical readers);
- Visual Communication Skills (analyzing the composition, effectiveness, and effect of messages that are expressed primarily or in significant ways through image or graphical depiction);
- Explanatory or Demonstrative Writing Skills (disseminating technical information to either non-technical or technical readers, such as descriptions and instructions).

Learning Outcomes

The following learning objectives form the basis of successful pedagogy in this course.

- Understand professional writing by studying professional communication contexts and genres.
- Researching contemporary business topics, analyzing quantifiable data discovered by researching and constructing finished professional workplace documents.
- Recognize, explain, and use the formal elements of specific genres of organizational communication: Formal and informal reports, proposals, memos, memorandums, business letters and promotional documents.
- Understand the ethical, international, social and professional constraints of audience, style and content for writing situations.
- Understand the current resources (such as search engines and databases) for locating secondary information and also understand the strategies of effective primary data gathering.

- Practice the unique qualities of professional rhetoric and writing style, such as sentence conciseness, clarity, accuracy, honesty, avoiding wordiness or ambiguity, using direct order organization, readability, coherence and transitional devices.
- Explore different format features in both print, multimedia and html documents, and develop document design skills.
- Revise and edit effectively in all assignments, including informal media (such as email messages).
- Develop professional work habits, including those necessary for effective collaboration and cooperation with the other students, instructors and Service Learning contact representatives. (Perfect depiction)

Course Objectives

If you effectively complete readings, practice exercises, workshops and assignments, you will be able to:

- Use written communication in your work and personal experience beyond college,
- acquaint with the concept of a writer-reader relationship and identify the need for active participation from both writer and reader,
- learn the skills needed to successfully communicate in a modern world through written materials.
- learn to identify and select many types of writing frequently required in a variety of careers,
- practice audience analysis and develop effective communication strategies for a variety of audiences,
- determine your purposes/objectives and develop skill in composing and revising on the computer documents with formats and language appropriate for those purposes,
- demonstrate in your writing the effective communication principles encouraged by professional writers,
- achieve a greater awareness of the importance of selecting and integrating graphics with written communication,
- Improve your ability to distinguish among and to use facts, a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning and judgments.

Course Development Coordinator/Writer
Dr Shamim Ali

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INTRODUCTION

In this contemporary age world has assumed the shape of the global village where communication among people of distinct languages and culture is possible via use of English language. English as a mode of communication has superseded the other languages therefore people of various backgrounds use this language as an easy mode of expression. This book also contributes in the development of English as a language to teachers of non-native origin. This book provides different techniques to be efficient in language skills like reading and writing. It explains the nature of reading skill and developing reading habit. The students will acquire different strategies that is going to improve their reading skills. The book also describes various barriers in reading and techniques to overcome them. The process of writing has been discussed in detail so that the students would be able to communicate effectively through different writing forms like letters, memorandums, application, reports and essays.

For Pakistani students, English language has assumed the status of greater significance in their academic as well as professional life. As it is not only official language but also is the academic language. Educational institutes use this as a compulsory subject at various levels including: primary, elementary, secondary, higher secondary, gradation and post graduate levels. It is the language of communication in official matters. In business and commerce English language also plays a significant role in terms of communication.

OBJECTIVES

After completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. Explain the nature of reading skill and developing reading habit.
2. Get acquainted with strategies to improve reading.
3. Understand barriers in reading and to overcome them.
4. Build their vocabulary.
5. Use writing process effectively.
6. Know about different strategies of writing.
7. Differentiate between authentic and inauthentic writing.
8. Communicate through letter and memorandum.
9. Get expertise in academic writing.

Unit–1

INTRODUCTION TO TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

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INTRODUCTION

It is important to make you aware of the important aspects of the most advanced methods of communication, especially in the current inter–related global world. This form of communication is called Technical Communication. As you are aware, communication is a distinctive characteristic of the human generation, which accomplishes most of the task as the perfect creation of the creator. The current circumstances, however, requires a more comprehensive realization of this most important quality. Thus, technical communication has been evolved during this twenty first century. the main purpose of this book is to keep you well-equipped with the knowledge and skills in technical communication. The book comprises nine units covering almost all the requirements of the up to mark training in the said course. Every unit begins with an introduction. This unit focuses on all the basic elements of technical communication, especially written technical communication through an introduction to a wide range of writing types and their associated requirements in technical communication. In addition, you will also be exposed to the importance, scope, global as well as Localisation aspects of technical communication; and after completing this unit, you will be feeling inspiringly motivated to perform efficiently in technical communication. Dear students, it is also very important to know that technical communication, like any other linguistic communication, can also never be separated from its basic foundation of cultural values. Therefore, to better understand technical communication, it is important for you to go through each unit and attempt all the exercises.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Comprehend the basic concept of technical communication;
2. Learn the definition of technical communication;
3. Know the range of writing types in technical communication;
4. Recognize the global aspect of technical communication; and communicate efficiently.

BASIC CONCEPT OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Welcome! This chapter opens up with the basic concept of technical communication one needs to know to communicate effectively. Needless to emphasize that it is a very important field of knowledge, which has lately caught the attention of universities worldwide, prompting them to offer suitable courses and programmes in technical communication.

To acquaint oneself with the subject, it is important to understand the definition given by Killingsworth and Gilbertson (1988, p 130-149) who state that technical communication is "Writing that aims to get work done, to change people by changing the way they do things". The definition has two parts: The first part particularly mentions the word "writing" which means the focus of technical communication is exclusively on written expression. Since organisations have to communicate with one another, they primarily do so by using the written mode of communication rather than oral communication. This is because oral communication is difficult to document; if for some time it is to be recorded, even then it needs transcription, which may require a lot of time, energy, and expenses. Therefore, written communication is not only easily recordable, but it is also more reliable and affordable; and can be very conveniently referred to anytime in the future. The second important point of the stated definition is "to change the people" which means to give them new information, convincing them on the topic under consideration and solicit their favours. Therefore, technical communication focuses on the written mode of expression, and through it; it gets the favors of the audience.

Much of U.S. thought focuses on the cause-effect patterns and problem-solving—identifying the causes of perceived effects and suggesting methods to alter the causes. In other cultures, however, a. more common thought pattern is "web thinking." In Chinese tradition, for instance, everything exists not alone but in a relationship to many other things so that every item is seen as part of an ever-larger web, but the web is as important as the individual fact. These thinking patterns become part of the way people structure sentences. In American English, one says, "I go to lunch every day," but in Chinese, one says, "Every day, to lunch I go." The first sentence emphasizes the individual, and the second emphasizes the web or context (Beamer, "Teaching"). Role of the Individual. The individual is often perceived differently in a group dominated by web thinking, and web and group ideas can greatly affect the tone and form of communication. In the United States, long influenced by a tradition of individualism, many people feel that if they can just get their message through to the right person, action will follow. In other cultures, representatives of a group do not expect that same kind of personal autonomy or ease of identification from their readers. In the United States, it is taught that the direct method is best: State the main point right away and then support it with facts. In some other cultures, that approach is unusual, even shocking. Although in the United States a writer would simply state in a memo that he or she needs a meeting, in web culture, like China's, that request would come near the end of the letter, only after context for the meeting had been established (Beamer, "Teaching").

1.1 RANGE OF WRITING IN TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Daniel G Riordan (Year 2005) in his book ‘Technical Report Writing Today’ provides the following writing types:

- Annual reports;
- Books;
- Computer hardware guides;
- Documentation sets;
- Hardware/software combination guides;
- Information materials;
- Magazines;
- Newsletters;
- Non-computer equipment guides;
- Organizational manuals;
- Promotional materials;
- Quick reference guides;
- Scholarly/professional articles;

- Scholarly/professional journals;
- Software guides;
- Technical reports;
- Trade/news articles; and
- Training materials.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

The importance of technical communication can be understood in the way people communicate every day through emails. They write letters of different kinds for different purposes. Applications are written on various issues. Proposals are prepared, reports written, and presented to make organizational decisions and implement policies. Agreements are made between organisations within and across borders. Books are written and published, magazines and organisational manuals are written, and informational materials and newsletters produced. Similarly, the other mode of communication, oral communication also takes place on certain occasions. Meetings and interviews are held, briefings and presentations are made, and formal speeches delivered within and outside organizations as regular routine activities.

1.3 SCOPE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Technical writing has a much broader scope. Although students of all disciplines learn English in their early years of schooling, spanning almost twelve years, English alone cannot be considered enough. As they would shortly be expected to communicate technically, especially nowadays, they need to learn and achieve mastery in technical writing at this stage of education. Technical writing is a form of writing used in technical and occupational fields and categorized under English for Specific Purposes, which enables learners to communicate more effectively. Students who are effectively skilled in technical writing would have various job opportunities in numerous fields. However, in Pakistan, it is a lesser-known ability but is, fortunately, getting recognition at a faster rate. Students with such skills can get employment in software companies, web development companies, the film industry, electronic and print media. They can be employed as editors of magazines, user manuals, guides and research journals, among others. In several other sectors like telecom, banking, energy, and insurance, skilled writers are required at a larger scale. Broadly speaking, technical writers have to develop reports, user guides, business correspondence, brochures and white papers for different types of products.

1.4 IMPACT OF TECHNICAL WRITING

Developed countries realized the need for technical writing soon after the Second World War and tried to produce technical writers to communicate globally. They had advantage over the eastern nations because their language was English while writers in developing countries had to learn the language, spending a lot of time in the process. However, with the advent of the internet and modern modes of communication, a couple of years ago, developing countries like Pakistan also realized the importance of technical writing to communicate within and across countries. This caused them to design suitable courses in technical writing. Technical writing has become an important factor in the progress and growth of an organization. Technical writers bridge the gaps between products of a company and its consumers. These are the technical writers who deliver information in the form of speech or document to a particular audience, for example, programmers, technical support staff, end-users, potential consumers and business partners. Thus, getting or losing a deal depends on the effectiveness of technical writers as the technical document and their write-ups make the face of the company. Consumers have become used to buying the product with proper documentation, otherwise, they do not like to purchase a non-documented product because to understand the technology or any other product, they configure, deploy, install and use these products afterward. Thus, in developing counties like Pakistan, technical writing is a dire need and plays a valuable role.

1.5 MAJOR TRAITS OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

1.5.1 Audience – Centered Approach to Technical Communication

It is important to understand the audience-centered approach to technical communication. In this approach, the communicator nullifies 'I' and focuses on 'you' attitude, which means that there, ought to be something attractive for the reader rather than mere self-praise on the part of the sender. The writer has to know the needs of the reader. The foremost need of a reader is to be able to understand the written message easily, so the message must be in a simple language instead of having any flowery and stylish or rhetorical expression. The reader likes to be dealt with in a polite and respectable manner, so the writer must be mindful of the reader's likes and dislikes. The reader always expects to accrue some benefits, so there should be something in the writing which offers benefits to him. Brief and to the point expressions are liked by the reader, so the writers should avoid larger and inappropriate messages. In this larger context, technical communication:

- Enhances relationships;
- Enables readers to act;

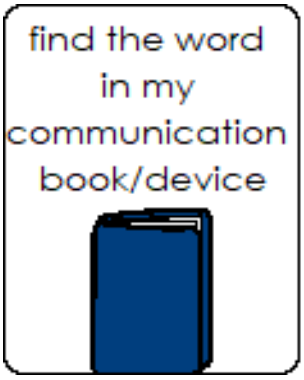
- Occurs within a community;
- Is interactive;
- Has definite purposes; and
- Is appropriate.

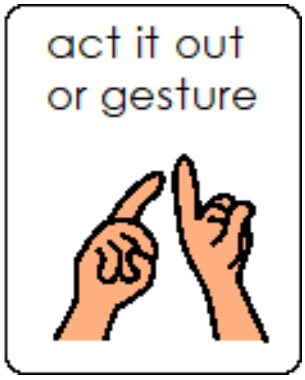
1.5.2 Technical Communication Enhances Relationships

Document preparation enhances the relationship for which the communicators should have an understanding (Schriver, 1997). It is a known fact that communication occurs in a community, not in the vacuum and the audience is a part of that community. It means that the readers have relationships with other people and the readers read because they have to relate themselves with others. In other words, the people are connected with a net of relations and the new communicator has to get into that net of relations and those nets have connections with many other nets and make a web. Therefore, a communicator needs to access new nets to become a part of the whole web of relations. For this purpose, effective, carefully documented reports, letters and applications, among others, are imperative to be prepared.

1.5.3 Technical Communication Enables Readers to Act

Communication has certain purposes to serve but there is always one particular purpose to achieve. Thus, the writers should focus on getting the action of the receiver because messages are prepared and delivered not for the sake of preparation alone but to initiate the receiver's attention to act on the intended purpose. Messages prepared carelessly cannot enable readers to act rather; they create a negative impression of the writer. So, the last part of the message should possess such quality and attraction for the reader so that he or she may act to give a positive response to the writer.



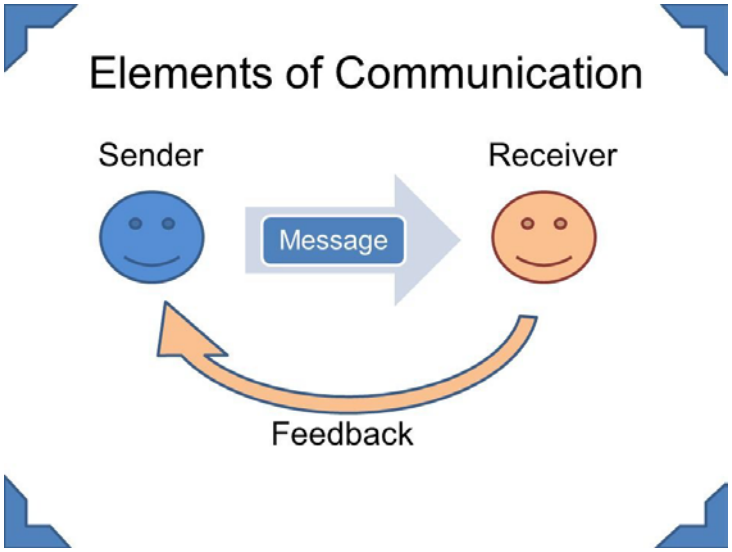


1.5.4 Technical Communication Occurs within A Community

Various communities of practice exist in a society like the business community, educational community, law community, human resource community, the medical community, political community and religious community. Every type of communication takes place within or across a community. Mostly, it occurs within a community that has a particular understanding of the things and certain views to respond and the skilled writer understands the needs and demands of that particular community to make his or her communication successful.

1.5.5 Technical Communication is Interactive

Communication is always interactive, and people exchange their ideas, views, knowledge, information, observations, experiences and facts. Communication is not a one-way process that can create communication hurdles rather, it is a two-way process. Thus, the writer of technical writing should use the interactive mode of expression as he or she will also have to receive a response to such communication.

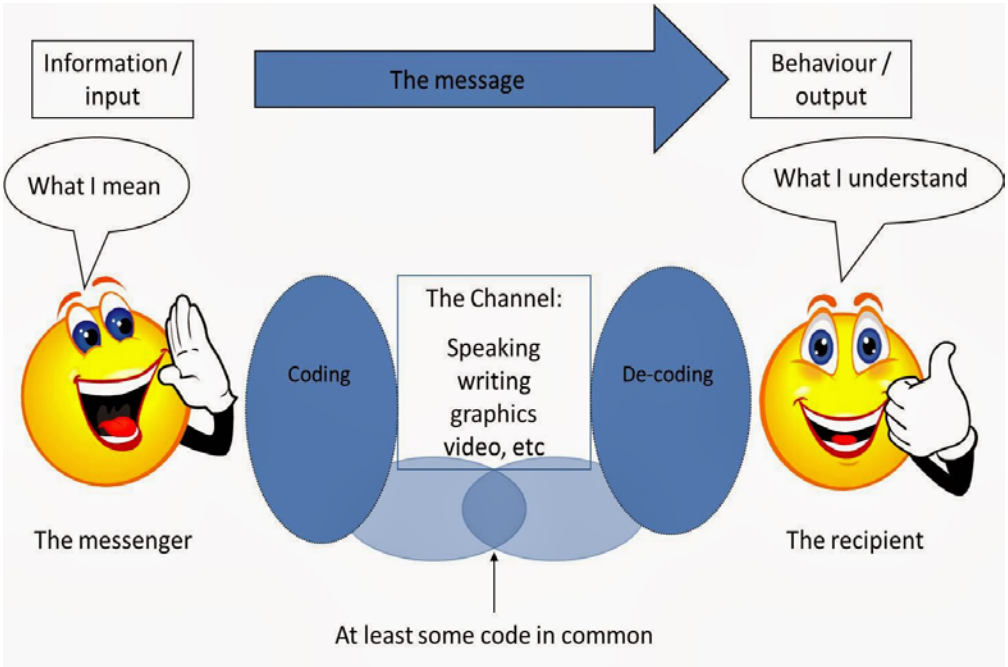


1.5.6 Technical Communication has Definite Purposes

Communication has to serve certain definite purposes. For example, an applicant writes an application to get a job, approval of leave, getting medical facility, etc. In the same way, certain reports written in a business organization have various purposes, like promotion of business, opening of new branches and resolving misunderstandings among workers. So, the writer should focus on the purpose of documentation and prepare it with full devotion.

1.5.7 Technical Communication is Appropriate

Appropriateness is an inevitable quality of technical communication and is referred to the suitability in an organization, or acceptability in society. In other words, the writer should be aware of social and cultural understanding and the preference given to some issues in a certain way. If the writer is not aware of these particulars, he or she may face problems in communication. There are certain norms and values in a society, culture, or an organizational context and probing these requirements may help the technical writer to succeed in his communication.



1.5.8 Organization of Technical Communication

The organization of technical communication is an important process of documentation. After planning, the data is collected and then organized because if it is not presented sequentially, the reader may get confused. Most important information is presented in the beginning. Every statement or sentence should be coherent from top to bottom. Headings are written in an organized manner. There are first-level headings, then second level and, in some documents, there are third levels of headings. The first level of heading follows the introduction of the subject, its explanation with required reasons and factors involved. They also follow the second and, sometimes, third level of headings, which also need sequence and organization. When the writer is skilled and technically sound, his or her writing is well organized, leading to a positive response from readers.

1. 6 GLOBAL ASPECT OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Today, communication is not confined to the interaction between people within the country rather, it goes across borders. A communicator has to communicate his or her message with the people who share the same culture and society as well as has to communicate with the people who share different cultures and societies even different languages. The purpose of communication is to use words, forms and patterns that help the reader to grasp the content. In intercultural communication, consideration is given to cultural factors and strategies to adopt communication for a variety of audiences. The very basic strategy is writing used in cross-cultural communication and is known as localization. According to Walter Bacah (1992, p 22-23), 'Localization involves translating content and adapting it to local culture-changing not only content, but also graphics, colors, time and date formats, units of measurement, currency and symbols'. According to Hoft (1995), there are two levels to localization as follows: radical; and general.

1.7 RADICAL LOCALIZATION

Radical localization is more in-depth, incorporating cultural differences that affect the way users think, feel and act. As an example, Nancy Hoft (Year) explains that an American document localized for a British audience, “needs to be adapted so that it uses the British spellings of words, British axioms and expressions, currency amounts in the British pound sterling and measurements expressed in metrics”, to name a few of the changes. A further distinction would involve adapting to the reading and learning styles of British users. According to Hoft, radical localization is concerned with the areas through which users think, feel and act (Hoft, 1995). In these areas, following rules are involved:

- Rules of etiquettes;
- The approach towards time and distance;

- The rate and intensity of speech;
- The role of symbols;
- Local symbols of economics, religion, and society; and
- The way people go about solving problems.

There is another point of view related to radical localization. When a person exhibits cultural bias, he or she sends a "community" message, indicating that the recipient is not part of the sender's community and that furthermore, the sender does not care. This subtext to any message makes communication much more difficult. To eliminate cultural bias, one needs to investigate what is important to members of the other culture (Hoft). The associations commonly made by one culture about some objects, symbols, words, ideas, and the other areas mentioned above, are not the same as those made by another culture for the same item—and re-member, the differences do not indicate that one group is superior to the other. For example, in China, the color red is associated with joy and festivity; in the West, red can mean stop, financial loss, or revolution (Basics). In the United States, janitor usually means a person employed to clean and maintain a building and is often associated with cleaning floors. But in Australia, that same job is called a care-taker — a word that in the United States usually means someone who maintains the health of another person (Gatenby and McLaren, year). To take another example (Hoft 74, 94), conceptions of authority differ—the French prefer to come to conclusions after appeals to authority, but Scandinavians prefer more individual exploration. Levels of personal acquaintance differ in business relationships in other cultures.

In the United States, people often conduct business, including very large sales, with people whom they hardly know, but in many countries, people prefer to achieve some kind of personal relationship before entering into any significant business arrangement with them. To communicate effectively, one must spend some time considering these differences and make changes in documents accordingly.

1.8 THINKING PATTERNS

Much of U.S. thought focuses on cause-effect patterns and problem-solving, identifying the causes of perceived effects and suggesting methods to alter the causes. In other cultures, however, a more common thought pattern is "web thinking." In Chinese tradition, for instance, everything exists not alone but in a relationship to many other things so that every item is seen as part of an ever-larger web, but the web is as important as the individual fact. These thinking patterns become part of the way people structure sentences. In American English, one says, "I go to lunch every day", but in Chinese, one says, "Every day to lunch I go." The

first sentence emphasizes the individual and the second emphasizes the web or context (Beamer, "Teaching").

1.8.1 Role of the Individual

The individual is often perceived differently in a group dominated by web thinking, and web and group ideas can greatly affect the tone and form of communication. In the United States, long influenced by a tradition of individualism, many people feel that if they can just get their message through to the right person, action will follow. In other cultures, representatives of a group do not expect that same kind of personal autonomy or ease of identification from their readers.

1.8.2 Role of Direct and Indirect Messages

In the United States, the direct method is considered to be the best: State the main point right away and then support it with facts. In some other cultures, that approach is unusual, even shocking. Although in the United States a writer would simply state in a memo that he or she needs a meeting, in web culture, like China's, that request would come near the end of the letter, and only after a context for the meeting had been established (Beamer, “Teaching”.

1.9 GENERAL LOCALIZATION

General localization deals with items, usually details of daily life, that change from country to country, for instance, date format, currency and units of measurement. Much of the literature that contains advice for writing in a global context deals with these concerns. Expert writers change these when preparing documents for another country. Certain items are related to daily life details, which change from country to country and culture to culture and considered general localization.

Therefore, senders focus on the style of the document, he or she should avoid using slangs, idioms, jargon and homophones to evade miscommunication. Much of the literature that contains advice for writing in a global context focuses on these issues (Repetition). These concerns are categorized into two broad areas:

- Culture-specific references; and
- Style.

1.10 CULTURE-SPECIFIC REFERENCES

Culture-specific items are those that one uses every day to orientate oneself. These items are often so ingrained that they are "invisible" to people in the culture—they are just the way things are done.

1.10.1 Time Formats

Countries configure the calendar date differently, some use Month/Day/Year, others use Day/Month/Year. However, a common practice is to present dates in numeral format, for instance, 01/03/20. Depending on the common configuration, these numbers could mean January 3, 2020, March 1, 2020, or even March 4, 2020

1.10.2 Weights and Measurements

The United States is one of the few countries that do not use the metric system. Most of the world travels in kilometers, measures in grams and liters and is hot or cold in degrees Celsius. While it is easy to interpret those weights and measurements one is familiar with, if one is not, the numbers can be very difficult to translate into a common experience (change miles to kilometers, Fahrenheit to Celsius). Americans know it takes about an hour to go 60 miles, but in Europe, it would be better to say 96 kilometers. In the United States, 86°F is hot, but in France, the same temperature is 35°C. Switching between systems is difficult and one can help readers by performing the switch for them.

1.10.3 Currency

Try to express values in the country's currency. Many websites and newspaper columns regularly report currency exchange values. Americans know that $8.50 is not a lot of money, but in Japan, that figure is 1000 yen.

1.10.4 Number Formatting

In English, the comma divides a number into thousands, then millions and so on. The decimal point divides the number into tenths or less-1,234,567.89. But in other countries, the same numbers use different punctuation. In Germany, that number is 1.234.567, 89.

1.10.5 Telephone Numbers and Addresses

In the United States, telephone numbers are grouped in threes and fours-715-444-9906, but in other countries, they are often grouped by twos-33 (0)1 23 34 76 99. In the United States, it is common practice to address an envelope with the name at the top and lists in descending order, the street address and city. In some countries, Russia, for instance, the address list is reversed; the country is placed on the first line and the name of the person on the bottom line.

1.10.6 Page Size

In the United States, the standard paper size is 8.5 x 11 inches; most documents are designed with these basic dimensions in mind. In many other parts of the world,

however, the basic size is called A4 (8.25 x 11.66 inches). The difference in size can cause difficulties in copying material.

1.11 STYLE

Style items are the subjects of many articles on globalization. The goals of managing style are to make English easier to understand and to make it easier to translate. Many of the style tips are simply call for good, clear unambiguous writing. Here are a few common style items (based on Hoft 214-236; Locke; Potsus) to consider:

1.11.1 Avoid Using Slang, Idioms and Jargon

Most of these are simply impossible to translate: “He is a brick.” “She hit a home run with that presentation.” We all come across slang, idioms and jargon daily. We say it in school, colleges, and streets, hear it on television, and post it in blogs, tweets and Face book messages. We tend to use this language with our friends because it is fun, easy and can come across as very casual. It often flows naturally out of our mouths because it is part of our personalities and culture. In a few places, we do not want to use it, however, in business correspondences, academic papers, presentations and speeches; the best way to avoid it is to keep your audience in mind. You have probably heard this age-old rule: write as though you are speaking before a group of executives with whom you are trying to impress. Keep your language simple and concise yet, explain everything without resorting to language or phrasing that might confuse and alienate your readers. Usually, reading your draft correspondence out loud helps. Any word or phrase that sounds too casual or informal may clue you in on instances of slang, idioms and jargon. Proofreading your document more than once also helps. Proofread as though you are a stranger to your correspondence. Make note of anything that seems unclear and strike out any possible slang, idioms and jargon.

Take time during the writing process. If we know we commonly use slang, then hone in on the choice of words that you use to construct a coherent sentence. Double-check our contractions since these are easily glossed over while proofreading. If we are unsure of how to rephrase something, then consult a thesaurus.

1.11.2 Avoid Using Humor

When a joke fails to get a laugh, the lame excuse often, "You had to be there”. Much humor is so culture-dependent that what is hilarious to people of one culture is nearly incomprehensible to people from another culture. Humor often just does

not work, except in very small communities. Good writers generally avoid humor in their writing for other cultures. Another important factor is Anthropomorphism in technical writing. Technical writing is supposed to be as direct and plain as possible. Anthropomorphism is attributing animal (or inanimate) characteristics to humans (Your lucky duck, you) or human characteristics to animals (or inanimate things), such as when you draw a comic with talking animals.

1.11.3 Avoid Puns, Metaphors and Similes

Metaphors and similes compare items to indicate worth or appearance. These devices are helpful, but only if the reader gets the point of the comparison. Puns are plays on words, often used in advertisements. But puns are virtually untranslatable. Use these devices only if you are sure the reader would understand them. A metaphor is a figure of speech that, for rhetorical effect, directly refers to one thing by mentioning another.

They may provide (obscure) clarity. Now, how is this supposed to work? As a literary device, these embellish a text. Also, they can make things less clear, especially on first reading — they can be complex and misleading for an unprepared audience. They can be also called poetic metaphors. Here is a famous quote by Orwell: "Advertising is the rattling of a stick inside a swill bucket". That certainly makes a mind wander. Technical writers are only interested in the ones that provide clarity; they are often called scientific analogies.

1.11.4 Use Glossaries

If you do use jargon, be sure to include a glossary of definitions. A solid glossary for your documentation team prevents hours of Internet searches from happening. It helps teach new hires, keeps the whole team up-to-date with the overwhelming amount of new information. But, most importantly, it helps you create better, more comprehensive user manuals. If you work with such a glossary when writing documentation, you can be sure the documentation is precise and all the troublesome words are explained to readers. Some companies already have glossaries. And, this is great! But, sadly, not that common. This means chances are high you need to create one. Of course, you can google everything or keep asking subject matter experts. This will not take you much time to understand how convenient this is to have all terms in one place. Here are some tips on creating a glossary:

- Items should be in alphabetic order for easier navigation;
- If you are creating an online glossary, add links, and cross-references. The ability to navigate quickly between articles and resources is one of the main advantages an online glossary has, so do not neglect it;

- Start with basic terms. Ideally, each word that can be characterised as a ‘term’ in your specific area should be on the list. Firstly, this way, you will make sure that you do know exactly what they mean. Secondly, imagine how helpful this would be when hiring people!;
- When adding rare/difficult terms, definitely consult subject matter experts;
- Make sure to keep your glossary up-to-date not just by adding new words, but updating the existing articles, too; and
- Just a piece of tiny advice from a person with experience: if you come up with a term to add or some addition to an article, do it right away or write it down somewhere. Otherwise, you will 100% forget this.

1.11.5 Include Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns are who, whom, whose, which and that. ‘That’ is often a problem. A sentence such as "A fire alarm losing power will beep" can be changed to "A fire alarm that is losing power will beep," or "The switches found defective were replaced" can become "The switches that were found defective were replaced" or "Maintenance personnel replaced the defective switches." 1.11.6 Do not use long noun phrases.

Often, English speakers string together a series of nouns. “Damage recovery results," for instance, could be the results of damage recovery or the act of damaging those results. To avoid misinterpretation, rewrite the phrase for the non-native speaker: "results of the damaged inspection”.

1.11.6 Avoid Using Homophones

English, with its millions of words adapted from languages across the globe and throughout history, has an abundance of those confusing words called homophones. *Homo* comes from the Greek word for "same," and the *phone* comes from the Greek word for "sound." Therefore, homophone means "same sound," and we use it to describe two or more different words with the same sound but different meanings, words like "pair/pear," and "peak/pique/peek." To native speakers, the context often makes the meaning of these phrases clear, but non-natives often have trouble with the meaning. There are over 7700 homophones in the English language and counting! This means that chances are high that you will mix up a couple of words at some point in your writing. It should be avoided in informal essays. If you are going to use them in a creative writing piece, it should be deliberate and done for a reason. Accidental ambiguity is usually just confusing, but deliberate ambiguity can add layers of meaning to a creative piece. It is all a matter of how carefully the author builds the ambiguity. Be aware that it will sometimes annoy your readers, so be careful with them!

1.11.7 Getting Rid of Misplaced Modifiers

Modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that restrict or provide additional information about other words, phrases, or clauses. Modifiers can be adjectives or adverbs. Modifiers that appear before the head are called pre-modifiers and modifiers that appear after the head are called post-modifiers. Consider the phrase "black ergonomic keyboards and mouse pads." Does this mean that both the keyboards and mouse pads are black and ergonomic? Or just the keyboards? To help non-natives, you need to express the material in a more precise, though longer, form: "mouse pads and black ergonomic keyboards" or "key-boards and mouse pads that are black and ergonomic." Modifiers must be placed as close as possible to the words they modify. While a correctly placed modifier enhances the meaning of the sentence, a misplaced or awkwardly placed modifier can disrupt the flow of thoughts and can create confusion in the meaning of a sentence. You can improve your writing quite a bit by paying attention to misplaced modifiers.

1.11.8 Write in Clear Subject-Verb-Object Order

If speakers are not familiar with the rhythms of English language speakers, they can become lost in the quickness and turns that sentences in English can take. Use the sentence order that non-native speakers likely learned in textbooks. Use "The director of the lab ordered new computers," rather than something like "Ordering lab computers was taken care of by the director." If your text is to be translated, also be aware of these concerns: Leave space for expansion (Locke; Potsus). English phrases often expand in translation. Translated text can be as much as 30 percent longer in other languages. Even a simple Canadian highway sign in English and French illustrates this: Chain-up area. *Attachez vos chaines ici.* If you have pages designed so that text should fall at a certain spot, leave extra room in your English original so that after the translation and subsequent expansion, the text will still be relatively at the same spot.

1.11.9 Avoid Wordy Phrases

Wordy phrases also make writing long and boring. For example, many people write on a daily basis instead of daily. The longer sentence may sound more important, but daily says the same thing more concisely.

Wordy phrases	Concise phrases	Wordy phrases	Concise phrases
a majority of	most	in the event of	if
at an early date	soon	it is often the case that	often
after	after, following	it is our opinion that	we think that
at present	now	it is our recommendation that	recommend that
at this point in time	now	it is our understanding that	we understand that
based on the fact that	because	make reference to	refer to

check out	check	of the opinion that	think that
even though	although	on a daily basis	daily
due to the fact that	because	on the grounds that	because
during the course of	during	prior to	before
during the time that	during, while	relative to	regarding. about
have the capability to	can	so as to	to
in connection with	about	Subsequent to	after
in order to	to	take into consideration	consider
in regard to	regarding, about	until such time as	until

1.12 GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

In our incredibly shrinking world, almost every kind of document produced has the potential to end up in the hands or on the screen of a person from another country and culture. This is both exciting and daunting. The potential for miscommunication is exponentially greater the farther from our home countries our communication moves, and not only because of translation issues. There are important cultural differences that must be considered. Establishing credibility has far-reaching implications. As more and more companies are themselves becoming international or partnering with multinational organizations, it is paramount that we become more culturally informed. To use language that is inappropriate-ate and therefore misunderstood can have enormous negative consequences. Likewise, to commit a cultural faux pas can be understood as much more than just a social misstep—it can be interpreted as arrogance or elitism. We have a responsibility to our clients or coworkers to become acquainted with their customs and needs. Developing a good cultural sensibility is not only good business, but it is also the ethical thing to do.

He or she sends a "community" message, indicating that the recipient is not part of the sender's community and that furthermore, the sender doesn't care. This subtext to any message makes communication much more difficult. To eliminate cultural bias, you need to investigate what is important to the members of the other culture (Hoft). The associations commonly made by one culture about some objects, symbols, words, ideas, and the other areas mentioned above are not the same as those Made by another culture for the same item—and re-member, the differences do not indicate that one group is superior to the other. For example, in China the color red is associated with joy and festivity; in the West, red can mean stop, financial loss, or revolution (Basics). In the United States, janitor usually means a person who maintains a building and is often associated with sweeping floors. But in Australia, that same job is called a care-taker—a word that in the United States usually means someone who maintains the health of another person (Gatenby and McLaren). To take another example (Hoft 74, 94), conceptions of authority differ—

the French prefer to come to conclusions after appeals to authority, but Scandinavians prefer more individual exploration. Levels of personal acquaintance differ in business relationships in other cultures. In the United States, people often conduct business, including very large sales, with people whom they hardly know, but in many countries, people prefer to achieve some kind of personal relationship before entering into any significant business arrangement with them. To communicate effectively, you must spend some time considering these differences and make changes in your documents accordingly. GLOBALIZATION requires cleaning up your document from all cultural references so that the document in effect becomes "cultural-less". This, for example, would be stripping away all metaphors and idiomatic expressions from your language that would not translate accurately (or at all) to another language. The purpose is to make sure any user from any cultural background would be able to understand the technical directions accurately, at the first reading.

1.12.1 A Final List

Here is a helpful synopsis of many of the points made in this section. When designing a site for a professional, international audience, you must follow most of the standard international communication guidelines commonly used for printed documents, online help and other forms of software design. In brief:

- Keep sentences short and to the point;
- Use simple subject-verb-object sentence structure;
- Avoid the use of embedded or dependent clauses;
- Use short paragraphs to allow for easier paragraph: by-paragraph interpretation;
- Avoid regional idioms or turns of phrase;
- Avoid any visual, textual, or interactive metaphors based on a specific national or social context (e.g., mailboxes and envelopes vary from country to country, so a mailbox icon that indicates "send mail" in the United States may just look like a blue box to the international visitor);
- Define technical terms as directly as possible, avoiding elaborate metaphors whenever possible; and
- If you have any doubt about users' knowledge of a specific term, define it.

1.13 EXERCISES

1. Make a list of several communities to which you belong (for instance, university students, this class, X corporation). Write a paragraph that explains how you used writing as a member of one of those communities to enable another member or members of the community to act. Specifically explain your word, format and sequencing (which item you put first, which second, etc.) choices.

2. Write a paragraph that persuades a specific audience to act. Give two reasons to enroll in a certain class, to purchase a certain object, to use a certain method to solve a problem, or to accept your solution to a problem.
3. Write a paragraph that gives a piece of audience information that they can use to act. For example, give them information on parking at your institution.
4. Draw a visual aid to enable a reader to act. Choose one of these goals: show the location of an object concerning other objects (machines in a lab; rooms in a building); show someone how to perform an act (how to insert a disk into a computer; how to hold a hammer); show why one item is better than another (the cost to purchase an object like a stereo or a TV or class notebooks; features of two objects).
5. Interview a professional in your field of interest. Choose an instructor whom you know or a person who does not work on campus. Ask questions about the importance of writing to that person's job. Questions you might ask include:
    - How often do you write each day or week?
    - How important is what you write to the successful performance of your job?
    - Is writing important to your promotion?
    - What would be a major fault in a piece of writing in your profession? and
    - What are the features of writing (clarity, organization, spelling, and so
    - on) that you look for in someone else's writing and strive for on your own?
6. Explain a situation in which you would write to a member of a community to enable him or her to act. Identify the community and detail the kind of writing you would do and what the reader would do as a result of your writing.
7. Bring to class a piece of writing that assumes that you (or the reader) belong to a community (good sources include newspaper stories on social issues like taxes, editorials, letters that ask for contributions). Point out the words and design devices that support your analysis. Alternate assignment: a piece of writing given to you by your instructor, determine the community to which the writer assumed the reader belongs.
8. Choose one of the models at the end of a chapter in this book or a sample writing you find in your daily life. Write a paragraph that describes how you interact with that piece of writing to gather some meaning.
9. Research your library's electronic card catalog. Write a paragraph that alerts your instructor to commands, screens, or rules that will give students trouble if they are not aware of them.
10. Research a database available through your library's electronic catalog. Tell students about at least two types of material in the database (abstracts of U.S. demographic information), and explain how that material will help them.

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Unit–2

APPLICATION OF TECHNICAL WRITING

Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

Reviewer: Ms Farah Saeed

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INTRODUCTION

Unit 2 is basically an extension of the basic concepts learned in Unit 1. This is, in fact, to let you have a good deal of practice of the knowledge gained in the previous unit. Thus, this Unit focuses on skills development in the field of technical communication. This Unit provides you with all the basic components as well as practical formats of written technical communication as follows audience design; demographic characteristics of the audience; expected knowledge level and role of audience; and factors affecting the communicative situation. In addition, this Unit provides you with a golden opportunity to practise in different forms of technical communication, which are mostly needed in the present official atmosphere. By familiarising yourselves with these aspects of communication, you will never lag behind to grab golden opportunities of leading others in the said field. The basic aim of this Unit will be achieved through special addition on writing memos, formal report writing, informal report writing along with recommendations, and comparative discussion on feasibility report writing and recommendation reports. This section of the unit will let you follow practically the main requirements of the above-mentioned reports and you will be able to plan and draft such reports even in current life situations as well. Nonetheless, it is essential for you to read the Unit thoroughly and attempt all the exercises in order to be well-prepared for spontaneous written technical communication.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Understand audience design;
2. Comprehend demographic characteristics of the audience;
3. Get clarity about the expected knowledge level and role of the audience;
4. Understand factors affecting the communicative situation;
5. Understand memos, formal report writing, informal report writing, recommendations and feasibility report writing;
6. Identify similarities and differences between feasibility and recommendation reports; and
7. Comprehend essential parts of reports and be able to plan and draft such reports.

2.1 BASIC CONCEPT OF AN AUDIENCE

Audience is an individual or individuals who are intended to receive the written message. In an organisational structure, every person has his/her own assigned role to play. Therefore, messages cannot be sent to everyone in an organisation. Certain designated officials have to be specifically addressed and render organisational responses after necessary deliberations. This is why it is extremely important to understand audience, since it controls so many writing decisions. Another important aspect is to understand the idiosyncrasies of the targeted audience. Some audiences could be skeptical while others are very receptive. Thus, in dealing with an audience with different psychological, educational, social, and cultural backgrounds, there is need to analyse intended audiences and create their profiles. An audience profile can be created without much ado by answering the following questions.

2.1.1 Who is the Audience?

- How much he/she knows?
- What does he/she expects?
- Which organisational background does he/she belong to?
- What kind of experience he/she has?
- What is his/her social and cultural background?
- Is he/she one person or a group or several groups?

2.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of an Audience

Understanding the demographic characteristics of an audience- allows the sender to prepare his or her message according to the expected circumstances. These characteristics involve age, ethnicity and sex of the audience. When the sender focuses on these characteristics, he/she gets the awareness of the audience, which prevents him/her from stereotyping. For example, if the sender has to write a complaint letter to a young person with little organisational experience and uses negative expressions in his/her message, it may irritate the reader and there is the possibility of severe reaction from the audience. In the same way, dealing with a young man is different from dealing with a young woman because both have different attitudes on certain issues. Likewise, an individual with greater organisational experience may react differently than a person with lesser experience. Moreover, people from different ethnic backgrounds may have different attitudes and expectations and if they are not analysed properly before preparing the message, can fail in communication.

2.1.3 Role of Audience

Sometimes, the audience is one person or a group. In other situations, there may be more groups of an audience and every type of audience has a role to play. It is like actors performing their roles in a story, drama, or movie. It is the responsibility of the sender to frame the audience according to the role he/she has to play in this particular communication. For example, if a sales promotion officer has to design an advertisement for a machine, he/she has three audiences with different roles. Firstly, the customer, whose role is to purchase the machine by understanding its quality, its better service life and its affordable price. Secondly, the company's owners, who are supposed to be satisfied with materials included in the advertisement, which can suit their expectations and thirdly, workers who will have to operate the machine and who expect an easy and reasonable functioning of the machine. After careful consideration of the three roles indicated above, the sales promotion officer will make the advertisement along with certain additional requirements, for example, photos or drawings of important parts or other required things by using suitable format and linguistic statements.

2.1.4 Feelings of the Audience about the Subject

Feelings of the audience about the topic or the writer can be described either as neutral and or positively or negatively inclined, which are important for the sender to analyse during the planning phase. In the case of a positively inclined reader, successful communication is possible and the same is the case with a neutral reader. However, if the reader is negatively inclined towards the sender or topic, it may raise certain questions about successful communication. The positively inclined reader will deal with every kind of communication without any personal bias and

whatever format or choice of vocabulary is used, his/her response will be positive. He/she has no concerns with style, writing, or words and statements selected and will try to understand the intention of the sender and react accordingly. The response of the neutral reader will also be positive in any case whatever it is. For these two kinds of audience, the writer has ease of communication without bringing any specific delicacies into consideration. On the other hand, readers who are inclined negatively to the topic or writer may seize upon anything that lets them vent their frustration or anger. To avoid manipulation and negative responses from such audience, the writer has to be careful about the format, choice of vocabulary, and the expectations of the audience to make the communication successful.

2.1.5 Feelings of the Audience About the Sender

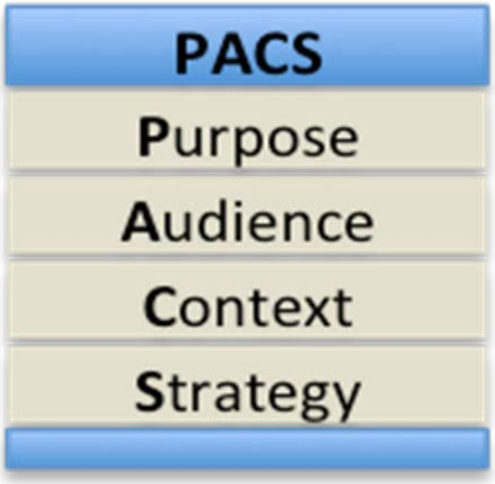
The sender is a person who encodes/sends the message. He/she transfers ideas on paper in the form of letters, applications, proposals, reports, computer hardware guides, documentation sets, hardware/software combination guides, technical reports and memos. He/she also refines messages of other writers in different types of writings, including newsletters, annual reports, information materials, magazines, non-computer equipment guides, organisational manuals, promotional materials, quick reference guides, scholarly/professional articles, scholarly/ professional journals, software guides and trade/news articles, etc. The audience may be limited to a particular person directly addressed in any form of writing or may be general audiences expected to read the message. In both cases, the message has to decoded and perceptions made about the writer in certain ways as follows format of the message; language used in the message; and correctness of the message. Any negligence in these areas may create a negative impression of the sender and the audience would have a particular feel of the writer; successful communication depends on effective technical communication. On the other hand, if things are taken care of according to the expectations and requirements of the audience, there will be a positive feel on the part of the audience for the writer.

2.1.6 Expectation of the Reader About Form

Through their writing, experienced writers develop a strong set of expectations for a wide variety of texts. The topic heading and opening sentences play an important part to guide the reader's expectations in a particular direction. It is very clear that readers base their expectations on what the writer wants to say and psychologically, it should bring benefits for them. Sometimes, technical writers choose to play on these expectations. They may decisively inspire readers to visualise that they are writing one kind of text and then switch partway through. However, sometimes, writers use their readers' prospects to lead what fundamentals they include in a text, how they are going to put it together and what effects they are trying to achieve. Such writings may include narrative style based on story description. Other styles

may be explanatory about the occurrence of a certain phenomenon. Other forms of writing are as follows problem-solving writing; argumentative writing; investigative writing; and evaluative writing. These forms of writing are mere guidelines and can be used in combination to get the intended purposes served.

2.1.7 Task of the Audience

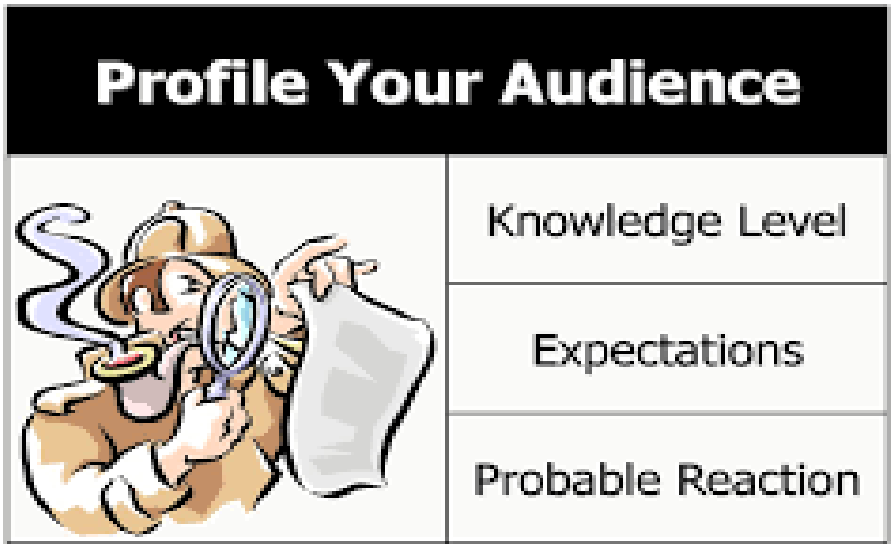


Technical writers encode their messages with an intended purpose by using a reliable medium, which may be postage, emails, faxes, telexes, telephone, face-to-face interaction, electronic media and print media, among others. The audience has to decode the message and attempt to understand the intention of the writer. For this purpose, they have to use their background knowledge to understand the message. If they are the direct audience, they should decode the message and respond quickly because delay in response may create restlessness on the part of the writer, and a similar response the audience may also face later from the writer. Since communication is a continuous process, the audience is a decoder of the message at one time, and maybe encoder/writer at another time. Thus, this is a mutually cooperative process. On the other hand, if the audience is an indirect decoder, he/she may apply response strategies according to his/her circumstances and needs. In the case of the audience as the listener, he/she should pay complete attention to the speaker and respond positively to elicit more information of the speaker otherwise, if the audience as listener shows negative response, it may affect speakers and they may eliminate most of the important information. Therefore, the

task of the audience in all situations requires a positive response for successful communication.

2.1.8 Level of Knowledge of the Audience

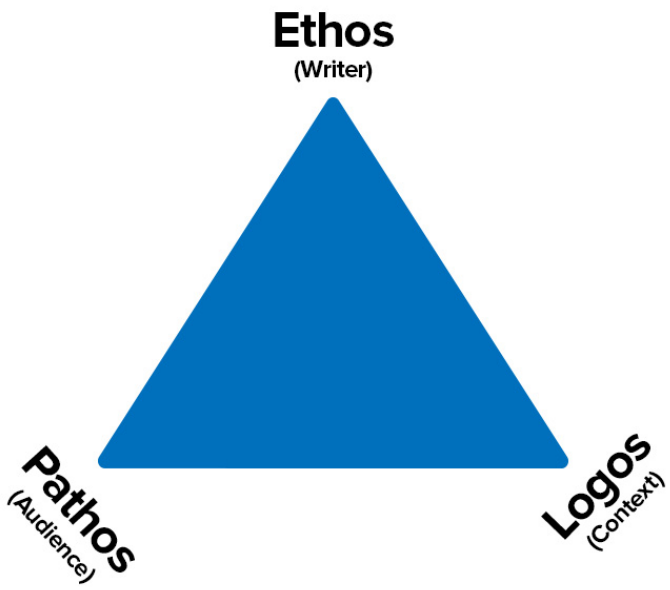
A writer needs to know the level of awareness his/her intended audiences' about knowledge of the subject of the document so written. It may range from a layman to a highly expert person. In technical writing, a layman may be intelligent and experienced but is uninformed and oblivious about a certain topic, basic facts and concepts.



As a technical writer, one should plan to write, which is understandable for the audience. There is no need to give an intellectual and rhetoric touch to the document. If the reader has little knowledge of the subject, then the writer should adopt an explanatory style of writing to make him/her better understand the theme of the message. On the other hand, if the intended reader knows a lot about the topic, then the writer should prepare the document to build on what the reader already knows. For a layman, the writer should avoid using technical terms. In case, they are necessary to be included, these terms should be defined and made clear for the audience.

2.1.9 Factors Affecting the Situation

Communication takes place in a certain context and every context has its requirements. However, some factors are common in most communicative situations.



In this respect, the relationship between both communicators range between informal to highly formal. If communication takes place between top-level and low-level management within an organisation, their roles are predetermined and both have to follow the same. On the other hand, if the communication takes place between managers of two different organisations, the requirements of the situation varies depending on their business relations and business needs. However, time, motivation, abnormal situation, expense, work experience, education level, motivation, stress level and urgency of situation are factors that can affect the communication situation. Policymakers and decision-makers or persons on a high level of the organisational structure, need to exercise control over these factors because if these factors are not controlled, they may create hurdles in the way of communication.

2.2 ELEMENTS OF A MEMO

A memo comprises the following elements

1. Name of the addressee;
2. Name of the writer;
3. Date;
4. Subject;
5. Body of the message; and
6. Attachments.

A Sample Memo

To Dr Arshad Qureshi,
Chairman, Syllabus Designing Committee,
Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.

From Dr Shamim Ali

Date 25th November 2019

Subject **Updating Students' Learning with Updated Technology**

Market study and investigation show that the planned advertising media for the new fall lines need to be reviewed and changed. Only book reading gains no interest in students or satisfies their needs. Received findings from focus groups and surveys revealed that the university needs (needed) to update its advertising techniques to line up with available trends of young adults today. No longer are young adults interested in sitcoms as they watch reality television shows. Also, it has become increasingly important to use the internet as a tool to communicate with our target audience to ensure our presence effectively in distance learning programmes online.

Attachments Results of focus group, January- May 2019; survey findings, January - April 20019

2.2.1 Formal Report

A formal report is structured according to certain specific elements that every writer has to follow and orient readers to the topics and organisation of the report. The elements are so unique to be followed by every writer. Formal reports are often considered as long reports as they include three main sections, for example, preliminary pages, a text section and supplementary pages that offer space for various other sub-sections. A long report may begin with, at least, 20-25 pages up to hundreds and even thousands of pages depending on the purpose and nature of the issue under study.

Worksheet for Formal Reports

- Determine the audience for this report.
- Indicate who the primary audience is.
- Who is the secondary audience?

- Plan visual aids, which will convey the basic information of the report.
- Prepare the visual aids.
- Ensure availability of a standard cover to protect your report.
- Create a title page.
- Prepare the table of contents.
- Determine levels of heads you will use in your report.
- Create a list of illustrations to identify the location of figures, charts, maps and tables in your report.
- Write the order of statements, for example, purpose, scope, the procedure in the introduction.
- Determine the chapters/sections of the body of the report.
- What methods you will use to collect the data.
- What is the population of your study?
- What will be the sample of your study?
- What will be the sampling technique to select the potential sample?
- Which methods/tools you will use to analyse the data.
- Mention the schedule for the completion of your report.
- Tell me about the importance of your actions.
- Talk about existing circumstances and the background of preparing the report.
- Mention the significance of the report.
- Write the proposed time frame for the report.
- Write the proposed cost in the report.
- Develop an appropriate style sheet for your report.
- Write which type of instructions you need.
- What type of report your audience can expect in the current situation?
- Prepare a glossary if you are using unfamiliar terms for the readership.
- List conclusions.
- Write the recommendations.
- Write the summary.
- Prepare appendices and technical material.

The following are elements of a long formal report:

Preliminary Pages

(i) Cover Page

The cover page is the first outer section of a long report, used for the protection of a long report. It includes the topic of the report, the name of the writer, the name of the authorising body and the date of the work assigned. Moreover, it includes the

monogram of the organisation and the name of the organisation as well. The cover page should be attractive and of good quality.

(ii) Title Fly

The title fly is the plain sheet of paper on both inner sides of the cover to protect the title page and the index pages of the report.

(iii) Title Page

The title page is the page with the same information as on the cover of the report.

(iv) Acknowledgements

In this part, thanking expressions are written for all those who supported the writer in the completion of the report.

(v) Table of Contents

The table of contents includes the major and sub-headings of the report along with the page numbers to facilitate the reader to access any part of the report he/she intends to read. Page numbers are arranged at the end of the writing of the report.

(vi) List of Illustrations

A list of illustrations is written below the table of contents but may be written on a separate page next to the table of contents if they are greater in number. They give information about the location of figures, graphs and charts presented in the text.

(vii) Summary or Abstract

A summery or abstract is the concise part of the report to provide a gist to the reader so that he/she may understand what is written in the report without going through the whole long report. It may consist of half-page to 10 pages depending on the length of the report.

(viii) Discussion — Body

(ix) Introduction

The introduction includes the background of the issue under study, the significance of the issue, scope of the study and the other relevant information to the issue.

(x) Description

This section provides supporting information to the issue under study and attempts to strengthen details relevant to the issue or problem under study.

(xi) Analysis and Interpretation

Certain relevant methods are used to analyse the data rigorously obtained. This is a very important section that focuses on the results or findings of the study after making interpretations of the analysed data.

(xii) Conclusion

This section is written after analysis and interpretation of data; it focuses on the final verdict of the whole study and provides a basis for the recommendations.

(xiii) Recommendations

Recommendations are suggestions made after the conclusion of the report. This is the action initiator part of the report, which is a guiding place for decision-makers to make decision and decide on policies accordingly.

(xix) Supplementary Section

(a) References/Bibliography

The report writer has to go through and cite certain important relevant theories, ideas and views of other writers to strengthen his/her study. To avoid plagiarism, he/she has to cite the works of theorists and combine them chronologically under references. If the writer wishes to add some extra references, which he/she has not mentioned in his/her work, but might be helpful for other writers, then the title to this section is given as bibliography.

(b) List of Appendices

The list of appendices is the second part of the supplementary section, which allows the writer to add material that could not be added somewhere else in the previous sections.

(c) Index

The index is the third part of the supplementary section. It works like a table of contents and list of illustrations and provides minute details of places, names, small headings and theories, among others.

2.2.2 Informal Reports

These are reports that have no distribution outside the organisation. These are used for internal purposes within the organisation. These reports range between one page to, at least, ten pages.

I. Elements of Informal Reports

Informal reports have the following elements:

- Introduction;

- Objective;
- Context;
- Discussion;
- Findings;
- Conclusion; and
- Recommendations.

II. Description of Elements of Informal Reports

These reports are written for internal purposes where senior members of the organisation are supposed to read the reports, therefore, they do not need preliminary and supplementary parts, which are essential in long reports. These reports are organised on letter format and the topic written first, then, the name of the writer, date of authorisation and reference to the authorising person is mentioned on the top of the page. The introduction is also written on the same page below the basic information provided. In the introduction, the background or context of the problem is written, significance and scope of the problem are optional may and may not be written. A discussion of the problem is made with logical and argumentative expressions. Later, findings are written preferably and on the basis of conclusion, recommendations are given as a guide to be implemented practically.

Worksheet for Informal Reports

- Identify your audience.
- Write the objectives of your report.
- Mention the schedule for the completion of your report.
- Tell me about the importance of your actions.
- Talk about existing circumstances and the background of preparing the report.
- Mention the significance of the report.
- Write the proposed time frame for the report.
- Write the proposed cost of the report.
- Develop an appropriate style sheet for your report.
- Write which type of instructions you need.
- What type of report your audience can expect in the current situation?
- Prepare the relevant visual aids you need for your report.
- Write what are the elements of your introduction and how will you use them to give a gist of the report to the intended reader.

III. Types of Informal Reports

The following are the types of informal reports:

- IMRD report;
- Brief analytical report; and
- Progress report.

(i) IMRD Report

IMRD refers to introduction, methodology, results and discussion. This type of report is written on the findings of a laboratory research, or data collected through a questionnaire. It informs readers about new knowledge or knowledge in a bigger context. The introduction includes statement of the problem, objective, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and scope of the study. The language of this type of report is highly formal or academic. The second part of this type of report is the methodology, which determines the data or experiment, data collection techniques and data analysis techniques. Moreover, this section provides the framework used to analyse data. In other words, IMRD is a technically, organised and scientific research report, which provides the ways to use proper techniques and methods in an organised and systematic manner to work on an issue.

Worksheet for IMRD Reports

- Write the introduction.
- Mention the goal and objectives of your report.
- Write the problem statement.
- Indicate actions you will take so that the reader may understand your line of action in writing the report.
- Tell them about the importance of your actions.
- Talk to concerned employees who will be involved in the project.
- Write the proposed time frame for the report.
- Also, write the proposed cost of the report.
- Develop an appropriate style sheet for your report.
- Tell how you will handle heads, chunks, page numbers, audio-visual aids and title/memo heads.
- Identify your proposed audience.
- Who is the audience?
- How will the audience use your report?
- What type of report your audience can expect in the current situation?
- Prepare the relevant visual aids you need for your report.

(ii) Brief Analytical Report

Such reports are very common in the business industry. Writers are given an issue which they view to find out and reveal important factors about the issue. Relevant conclusions are given as a result of the analysis of factors identified. This type of report also begins with the introduction, presentation of data collected, findings, and analysis of various factors involved in the issue. At the beginning of the report, the issue is introduced, the discussion made and results are provided. Finally, the conclusion is written based on the recommendations suggested for implementation in the organisation.

(iii) Progress Report

This type of report is very helpful for management to know the status of the project. It is submitted on a regular basis for potential readers to be informed of the progress of the project. Based on the report, management can re-allocate the budget and take important steps to run the project smoothly. This report provides information to management about the progress of a project. It includes sections such as the introduction, work completed, work scheduled and problems faced. In the introduction, the writer defines the issue, time period covered and states the purpose. In the work completed the section, the writer writes about the time frame for the project and the extent to which the work has been completed. It enables management to give instructions to project holders to speed up the work so that it may be completed in the scheduled time. Moreover, problems faced by project holders during the completion of the project are also mentioned in this report and management takes actions to reduce or solve problems, which may affect the completion of the project.

IV. Outline for Reports

It is common for people to write reports without creating an outline first. It might be true; however, a good report always needs an outline because it facilitates one to organise thoughts and facts on paper. It is such an important tool that once grasped may be beneficial for future assignments. The outline is not only required for class reports, but required for high school and college speech classes as well. Even public speakers also use an outline to keep from rambling when they give talks at meetings or seminars. An outline is an organisational tool, which helps even the scattered brain person to keep things in hand to pull together a first-class report. It is suitable to say that if a report were an animal, then the outline might be its skeleton. Similarly, if an outline is considered as a house, the outline will be its frame. Even if the outline were a video game, the outline might be its engine. First, is the topic outline and the second is the sentence outline. A student can choose to design his/her outline with brief phrases or whole sentences, not both for the same report.

Example of A Topic Outline

Dr Sophia Ali

	Introduction
1	Place of birth
2	Graduated from
3	Achievement
4	Currently serving
5	Conclusion

Example of A Sentence Outline

Dr Sophia Ali

	Introduction
1	My celebrity was born and raised in a small town in South Africa's Sahara region
2	Graduated from Michigan University, USA
3	She won a talent competition and gained international exposure
4	She is currently serving at the Human Rights Commission of the UNO
5	Conclusion

It is pertinent to note that the introduction and conclusions do not (contractions are not used in formal writing) provide information to the reader. The purpose of the introduction is to capture the attention of the reader to the topic. The conclusion is written in line with the introduction. The conclusion also provides the significance of the findings. However, the outline should reveal only key points of the report. It is also important to note that facts and details of the report, as well as the introduction and conclusion, are set side by side for use in the report itself.

V. Recommendation

This type of report is written to present a position based on credible criteria and facts. A recommendation helps potential readers to accept suggestions provided in the report, make certain important decisions and initiate a work or a project. For example, recommendations are given to choose machine A or machine B; or whether to make a part or buy it; or which type of investment is required, etc. In other words, recommendation reports provide alternatives to choose or reject. Thus, this type of report is very beneficial to professionals.

(i) Planning A Recommendation Report

Writers visualise the need for their readership, use visual aids and select a format as well as an organisational principle.

(ii) Consider the Audience

A report always travels up the organisational hierarchy to a group. A committee or a board has to read the recommendation report. Thus, the writer should be reader-oriented because it is the reader who decides certain things about a project. If there is reader-orientation, then things go on smoothly, if the report does not satisfy the expectations of the reader, then it might be changed or create confusion. Therefore, there should always be reader-orientation in a recommendation report.

(iii) Choice of Criteria

The criterion is a parameter, which guides the writer to make his/her data meaningful. It is crucial to select the criteria for the recommendation report because the choice of right criteria enables the writer to establish the credibility of the report.

(iv) Elements of Criteria

According to **Holocombe and Stein**, there are three elements of criteria as follows The first is the name of the criteria; the second is the standard of criteria; and the third is the rank of criteria. The name of the criteria is, for example, 'cost' and the standard of the criteria is the 'limit of cost, for example, 'not to exceed 300 dollars'. Consider any one type of criteria, for example

- The cost of the water heater should not exceed 500 dollars; and
- The water heater should be purchased as cheap as possible.

Moreover, the 'rank' includes the weight or size of the water heater.

(v) Discovering Criteria

It is a significant fact that criteria vary based on the type of the problem. In some instances, the group or the individual has to set up criteria based on rank. Some have to select the criteria based on cost and others may select the criteria based on appropriate categories, such as technical, management and financial criteria.

(vi) Applying Criteria

Criteria is applied based on available information. For example, somebody wants to use a water cooler in a school. To make the decision, the person has to find the relevant data and create relevant standards.

(vii) Using Visual Aids

There are different kinds of visual aids, such as maps, demographic statistics, drawing key features, flowing charts for procedures; one is supposed more likely to use tables and graphs. It is easy to provide information within these visual aids. In various places in the report, any of these visual aids can be used to provide information, properly and systematically.

(viii) Drafting the Recommendation Report

A recommendation report begins with an introduction. In the introduction, the statement of the purpose is written, which highlights the importance of the recommendation. After that, the method of investigation is explained, which is very important and gives more credibility to the recommendation report. Moreover, the scope of the statement is written, which brings the range of importance to light for the reader. Lastly, the problem is explained and the conclusion written. These steps make recommendation reports highly credible and readers can decide easily about the choice of the recommended issue.

VI. Feasibility Report

A feasibility report is written to determine whether a project is worth undertaking or not. According to **Ramige (1992),** writers size up a project before it is undertaken and identify projects that are not worth pursuing. The project can be on anything, for example, deciding about a golf course at a specific site, it may be to start a capital campaign drive, or may be to decide about the installation of milling machines. The scope of a feasibility report can be wider in scope, it may start with analyses of projects costing millions of dollars to informal reviews of in-house proposals. The goal of the writer in preparing a feasibility report is to investigate factors that can prevent the project from continuing. Thus, the writer has to draft a question, for example, “Can we pledge the project?” Then, a rationale is provided whether the project should be carried on or not.

(i) Planning A Feasibility Report

A feasibility report also follows the same steps used in a recommendation report. Besides, the following guidelines should be considered

- Consider the audience;
- Determine the criteria;
- Determine the standards; and
- Structure according to criteria.

It is important to consider the audience as they assist writers to provide all possible information and are generally familiar with the situation in a broader sense. Writers know that a certain time frame is required and allowed for cost recovery, but actually, they do not know what exactly the time required to complete a certain project. Since the focus is on determining criteria, the management committee, prevailing practice or a group directs investigators to consider criteria, for example, cost and level of completion. Moreover, it is important to note that to determine standards, is to state the limits of criteria. Finally, the discussion part of a feasibility report is structured according to criteria.

(ii) Writing A Feasibility Report

The report writer needs to select a format and then write the introduction and body of the feasibility report.

(a) Choose A Format

It all depends on the length and nature of the feasibility report, which facilitates the writer in choosing a suitable format. If the length of the report is adjusted, a long formal report should include the preliminary section, such as the cover, title fly, title page, letter of transmittal, table of contents, list of illustrations, acknowledgments and synopsis. Moreover, the writer should add up the supplementary section along with his/her feasibility report, which includes the bibliography, index and appendix. On the other hand, if the length and purpose of the report allow fixing up in the category of the short informal report, then, the writer needs to follow the letter format, excluding the preliminary section and supplementary section from the feasibility report.

(b) Writing the Introduction and Body

In the introduction, the writer needs to indicate the background, the conclusion and recommendations. The writer should treat the introduction of a feasibility report the same as a recommendation report since the nature of both reports is almost the same. In the discussion section, the writer is required to provide all relevant material and details under every sub-heading designed for the feasibility report. Moreover, as with all reports, the writer should use appropriate visual aids, including charts, maps, tables and even graphs to make ensure better understanding by readers.

Worksheet for Planning A Project

Write a question you want to be answered.

(For example, you want to get the answer to your question as 'The project would be able to preserve the corpus of Pahari Language from Himalayan Region').

- A list of topics and keywords should be written, which might help you find information on your question.
- A list of methods for finding out about already written topics should be made.
- Make a list of those specific acts you will undertake.
- Talk to those concerned employees, who will be involved in that project.
- Write the proposed time frame for the project.
- Also, write the proposed cost of the project.

2.3 USER MANUALS

User manuals are written instructions, descriptions and illustrations that tell about machines or objects to guide readers about their formation, parts, sequencing, functions, precautionary measures, benefits of the machines or objects, their prices, suitability for users, and problems or faults as a result of misusing or wrong operating. Imperative sentences are written in user manuals. Moreover, statements written need brevity and relevance instead of long descriptions. Motivational and instructional mode of expression is the priority of this type of writing, which would better explain the suitability of a machine or an object, create interest of purchasing in the mind of the reader, cost-benefit, and necessity of machine or object is created by developing credibility of its use.

2.3.1 Planning Manuals

Manuals are prepared based on human psychology and sales promotion writing for them to attract potential buyers to preferably buy products since similar kinds of products are also available in the market. Thus, the better manual planning and writing are, the better the chances of its sales. In this respect, the following points are important in the planning of a manual

- Determine your purpose;
- Consider the audience;
- Determine a schedule;
- Discover sequences;
- Analyse the parts and steps; and
- Format pages and select visual aids.

2.3.2 Determine Your Purpose

The purpose of a manual is to allow the reader to perform certain actions. It is important to mention that a manual does not need every detail about any system rather, a writer has to write certain topics for readers to follow. For example, a reader may need only to know about the price, quality and function of a machine. Another reader, who is the technician may need details of parts of the machine, their sequential use, a combination of parts and even the uses of every part in the machine. So, the writer should be clear in his/her purpose.

2.3.3 Consider the Audience

The purpose of preparing a manual is directly related to the consideration of an audience. The audience may be a consumer, a technician, or a distributor, or a seller. Identifying the audience can lead the manual writer to write according to the needs of the audience. A consumer does not need information required by a technician.

Similarly, a technician does not need information required by a distributor and vice-versa. In other words, the preparation of a manual is directly related to the needs of the audience. Moreover, why should the consumer know about the function of every part of the object or machine and why should a technician know about the cost and duration of the functioning of a machine or object? The concern of a writer is preferably the functions and combination of the machine since he/she should be able to remove a fault or combine the parts of an object in a proper sequence to run the machine.

2.3.4 Determine A Schedule

The writer needs to set up the entire project in the early part of planning. A manual project does not just move around the writer, rather, many people will have to review the project. Sometime, a client might have placed an order directly to the manufacturers of a machine, senior management might have instructed the engineer to design an object, or sometimes, the engineer has to get the assistance of the writer of the manual. Thus, many situations may happen in the selection of a proper schedule. So, think of each draft as a cycle because you write and someone else will review and, as a result of the review, you will rewrite or redesign. So, schedule the project keeping in mind the time frame, including reviews and redesigning.

2.3.5 Discover Sequences

Discovering sequences means learning what the product does and what people do as they use it (**Cohen and Cunningham, 1984**). Thus, it is important to learn about every part and its functioning to talk successfully to an engineer. Although this process takes a good deal of time, for better results, one has to do that and improve his/her knowledge about the parts and their sequences. Thus, the writer needs to make flow charts or decision trees and see how it fits into the sequence with other actions to guide the reader on how to make sequences of an object to function properly. In this regard, according to **(Riordan)**, the following should be included in a manual:

- How to assemble it;
- How to start it;
- How to stop it;
- How to load it;
- How it produces its end product;
- How each part contributes to producing the end product;
- How to adjust parts for effective performance; and
- How to change it to perform slightly different tasks.

2.3.6 Analyse the Parts and Steps

Make a list of each important part and explain its function. For a manual writer, it is better to convert the list of parts into a sentence. If a writer looks at a few common user manuals, he/she will find a common user manual, say, for a DVD player, it will always be in front of the manual. A helpful method in this regard is to make a three-part row for each part and then name them by starting with a verb and then write the effect of the verb. In this way, the writer can make a list of parts into a comprehensible sequence. Moreover, analyse every step to be included, which will make things easy to lead on.

2.3.7 Format the Pages and Select Visual Aids

Page formatting is another part of planning. The manual writer has to follow a format in the beginning, although page numbers are given at the end of the whole writing decision about page formatting, makes the writing process easier and smoother. In this respect, it is better to choose a style sheet with a visual logic that associates a particular look or space with a particular kind of information, including all figure captions in italics, all page numbers in the upper outside corner and all notes in a different typeface. Moreover, to produce effectively laid out pages, a grid and a template can be used and the former is a group of imaginary lines that divide a page into rectangles and the latter is an arrangement of the entire elements that appear on each page, including page numbers, headers, footers, rules, blocks of text, headings and visual aids. If he/she uses these grids and decides a proper template, it will make things easier in preparing a user manual. It is also an important part of planning a user manual that appropriate visual aids should be decided and organised at the beginning, which can provide a clear and correct picture to the intended reader.

2.3.8 Writing the Manual

Writing a manual depends on the planning. Once planning is over, it can be turned into writing a manual. Thus, the writer should arrange the sections into two parts as follows:

- Description of the parts; and
- Introduction to all sequences.

In the first part of the writing, the writer needs to describe the parts and their functions. For example, if the camera is a machine that constitutes the focus of the manual, then, the writer should provide the details of all parts and associated accessories. In the second section, the sequence of the parts should be given to draw a logical sequence. The significance of the camera, its accessories, parts, their function and sequences everything should be mentioned. Then, the cost of the

camera, its durability and credibility should also be mentioned. Moreover, the zooming process, quality of the picture, shooting in the dark, and recording procedure should also be mentioned clearly and effectively. Where necessary, the writer should also take into consideration the help of visual aids to convince the intended reader to buy the product.

Worksheet for Preparing a Manual

- Consider the audience.
- The extent to which the audience needs information about the user manual.
- Determine the location where the audience will use the manual.
- The action the audience will take after reading the manual.
- Determine a schedule.
- Write about the due date of completion of every stage and the last version of the manual.
- Determine the person or group who will review the manual.
- How long will each review cycle take?
- Write about the procedures a user must follow to operate the product.
- Enlist the parts of the user manual.
- Sequence the parts of a machine or an object whatever that is.
- Create a list of illustrations to identify the location of figures, charts, maps and tables in your report.
- Write the order of statements, for example, purpose, scope, procedure in the introduction.
- Tell about the significance of your actions.
- Talk about existing circumstances and the background of preparing the manual.
- Write the proposed cost on the product.
- Develop an appropriate style sheet for your manual.
- The type of manual your audience can expect in the current situation.
- Choose a visual aid strategy.
- Create a storyboard for your manual.
- Write about the accessories and additional beneficial features of your product.

Exercises

Create

1. Create an objective/summary introduction for any report.
2. Create a different introduction for the analytical report on purchasing your photocopier for your office.
3. Write a methodology statement that explains how you recently went about solving some problems or discovered some information. When you have finished, construct a visual aid that shows the results of your actions. Compare these statements and visuals in groups of two to three.
4. Write the introduction of the material.
5. Write the discussion section for the material.

Analyse

6. Since the introductions implies a lot about the relationship of the writer to the reader, analyse the introductions of any reports and determine the relationship of audience-writer.
7. Read the introduction and body of another student's paper from one of the writing assignments below, does the discussion present all the material needed to support the introduction? Are the visual aids effective? Is the format effective?

Groups

8. In groups of three or four, analyse sections of the IMRD report on collaborative software on pages. How is the introduction related to the discussion? Do you feel that you know everything you need to know after reading the first few paragraphs? What does the discussion section add to the report?

9. In groups of three, read the introduction of each person's paper from one of the writing assignments below. Decide whether to maintain the current arrangement; if not, propose another.

10. a. In groups of two or three, decide on a question that you will find the answer to. A good example is how to use some aspects of e-mail, the library, or the web. Before the next class, find the answer. In class, write an IMRD that presents your answer.
    - I = question you wanted to answer and goal of this paper.
    - M = relevant actions you took to find the answer.
    - R = the actual answer.
    - D = the implications of the answer for yourself or other people with your level of knowledge and interest.

10. b. In groups of two or three, read each other's IMRD reports and answer the following questions
    - Do you know the question that had to be answered?
    - Can you perform the actions or steps given to arrive at the answer?
    - Is the answer clear?
    - Is the discussion helpful, or irrelevant?

Wilting Assignments

1. Write an informal report in which you use a table or graph to explain a problem and its solution to your manager. Select a problem from your area of professional interest, for example, a problem you resolved. Consider topics such as pilferage of towels in a hotel, difficulties manufacturing a machine part, a sales decline in a store at a mall, difficulties with a measuring device in a lab, or problems in the shipping department of the furniture company. Use, at least, one visual aid.

2. Write an IMRD report in which you explain a topic you have investigated. The report could be a lab report or a report of any investigation. For instance, K. could compare the fastest way to reproduce a paper, by scanning or retyping, give the results of a session in which you learned something about navigating on the Internet or present the results of an interview you conducted about the worthwhile concern at your school or business.

3. Bring a draft of the IMRD you are writing to the class. In groups of two or three, evaluate these concerns
   a. Is the basic research question clear?

b. Does the method make you feel like a professional reporter?
c. Could other people replicate the actions?
d. Does the only method—and not results—appear in the method section?
e. Is the method statement written like instructions or a process description? Which is the best for this situation?
f. Are the results clear? Are they a clear answer to the original question?
g. Does every topic mentioned in the discussion section have a clear basis of fact in the methods or results section?
h. Is the significance the writer points out useful?
i. Does the visual aid help you with the methods or result section? Would it help the other people?
J. Is the tone all right? Or is it too dry? too chatty? too technical?
k. Does the formatting of the report make it easy to read?

4. Rewrite the IMRD from Writing Assignment from a completely different framework—for instance, a coach explaining the subject to a high school team. After you complete the new IMRD, in groups of three or four, discuss the difference "author identity" makes and create questions to tell writers how to choose an identity.

5. Convert your IMRD report from Writing Assignment 2 into an article for a newsletter.

6. Convert your IMRD report from Writing Assignment 2 into a set of instructions. After you complete the instructions, in groups of three or four, construct a list of the differences between the two, especially the method statement. Alternate In groups of three or four, construct a set of guidelines for when to use instructions and when to use IMRD. Hand this list to your instructor.

7. Write an outline report in which you summarise a long report. Depending on your instructor's requirements, use a report you have already written or one you are writing in this class.

8. Write a learning report for the writing assignment you just completed.

Web Exercise

Write an IMRD that explains a research project on the effectiveness of a search strategy on the Web. Choose any set of three words (e.g., plastic + biodegradable' + packaging). Choose any major search engine (Yahoo!, Google). Using the "advanced" or "custom" search mode, type in your keywords in three sequences, —

plastic + biodegradable + packaging, packaging + plastic + bio-degradable, biodegradable + packaging + plastic. Investigate the first three sites for each search. In the IMRD, explain your method and results and discuss the effectiveness of the strategy and the search engine for this kind of topic. Large group alternative Divide the class into groups of four. All members of" the class agree to use the same keywords, but each group will use a different search engine. After the individual searches are completed, have each group compile a report in which they present their results to the class orally, via e-mail, or on the Web.

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Unit–3

THE PROCESS OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

Reviewer: Ms Farah Saeed

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INTRODUCTION

Unit 3 is based on the whole process involved in technical communication. Since the main focus is on written medium in technical communication, it depends on a step-by-step process. Accordingly, a technical communicator or writer has to plan, devise format, write, review, edit and then produce or publish his or her written work. How to do it successfully? The answer is provided in detail in this unit. As a matter of fact, the process of technical communication requires gathering information as well as its description through the art of summarising, defining, and describing and the most important factor of having the understanding of the target reader in the communication process. Then, for writing aptly, a technical writer must know how to use appropriate words, phrases, and clauses with coherent sentences and well-organised paragraphs. All these significant and essential requirements are discussed in this Unit. Additionally, a section is also added on how to write internal and external Proposals. Nevertheless, learning technical communication will remain incomplete, if the technical writer does not know how to initiate and win research projects and provide a strong basis for any kind of scholarship. Hence, this aspect of technical communication is also detailed out in the Unit. At the end of the Unit, the art of writing a summary and an abstract is also presented; the reason being that without their inclusion, a technical written draft cannot have its required impact on the target audience. Worksheets have also been included in this Unit to assist you with the skills involved in technical writing.

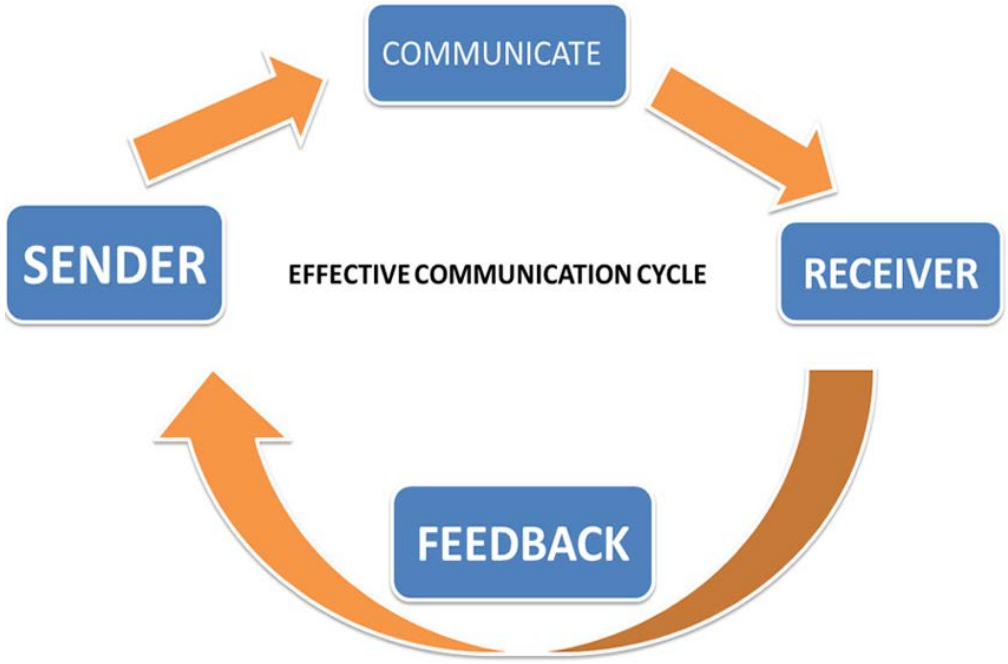
OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Comprehend the process of effective writing planning;
2. Gather information during the communication process;
3. Describe information gathered;
4. Learn the art of summarising, defining and describing;
5. Learn the importance of understanding the reader in the communication process;
6. Use appropriate words, phrases, and clauses with coherent sentences and well-organised paragraphs
7. Write internal and external proposals; and
8. Initiate and win research projects and provide a strong basis for any kind of scholarship.

3.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

The technical communication process needs the writer to situate him/herself to determine knowledge of the topic and goal for the reader. The writer should also consider ethical, legal and global issues, if any. The content strategy of the writer and the physical appearance of the document should be the focus of the writer. In the communication process, the person on the other side of the fence is the reader. The writer should know about him/herself and then design the document. Moreover, it should also be in his/her notice how and what kind of vocabulary required and what type of sentence structure would be more appropriate for the existing situation.



3.2 PLANNING YOUR DOCUMENT

The planning stage requires the reader (writer) to ask certain important and relevant questions to carry on the communication process. The communication process mainly depends on the situation, which can guide the reader to plan whether the document will be brief or lengthy. Wordy expressions for minor situations and short messages for detailed situations create hurdles in communication and reflect negative expressions. During the writing process, the writer should ask the

following questions to him/herself:

- Who is the audience?
- Which format does the document require? and
- How much time is required for the whole process?

Answers to these questions will bring clarity in the mind of the technical writer, which is an important quality. Without clear thinking, there is no clarity reflected in the message. In the beginning, the writer has to create a general idea of the document, which can further support him/her during organisation and documentation.

3.2.1 Situate Your Document

As mentioned earlier, the writer has to adjust him/herself according to the situation and better ask the following questions

- What is your goal?
- How much project knowledge do you have?
- Is there any model to help you focus your thinking?
- Are global issues involved? and
- Are legal or ethical issues involved? (**Riordan).**

3.2.2 Create an Audience Profile

The audience profile allows the writer to plan and organise messages by keeping the audience in mind. Knowledge of the audience is very important because every audience is different from the other and requires certain things that are not required by many others. To create an audience profile, the writer should know who the audience is, what is the role of the audience in this communication, what is the knowledge level of the audience, what internal and external factors can affect the communication process. Getting answers to these questions can assist the writer to better and easily draft a message.

3.2.3 Create a Document Plan

Creating a document plan enables the technical writer to document the message properly and comfortably. Thus, the writer knows the content to incorporate in the message. The topic is very clear to the writer and he/she adjusts the information according to what is at his/her disposal. It helps the writer to adopt a certain strategy to benefit the reader so that he/she may understand the content of the message as it was intended. It also facilitates the reader to select a reasonable genre to compile up his/her information. An established pattern selection is also of vital importance, which is ensured with a better document plan.

3.2.4 Design Your Information

Instead of choosing to plan the whole information, the writer should plan to organise the information within the organisation. A reader's attention operates over getting a sketch of the writer's intention through message, especially with cueing devices incorporated by the writer in his/her message and decoding by the reader to understand the intended meaning. Although detailed explanation on cueing devices is required to assist both communicators, it is discussed in the under drafting, testing and finishing the document.

Figure: Information Management

3.2.5 Design Your Template

Every writing genre has its template. Sometimes, the writer is aware of the template of the company and sometimes, he/she may have to find the template from the company's website or on request, it can be made available if the writer is new in the company. Otherwise, the writer can design his/her template as well use the templates of other companies if required.

Figure: embrywilliamstemplates2

3.2.6 Create a Production Schedule

Every type of communication has its production requirements. The writer develops a chronological list of activities and follows the list. This is not merely a routine list; it is very important and needs serious attention and consideration. Some documents are lengthy and very detailed, while others are short and it is the writer who can decide and finalise a better schedule. If schedules are not designed or if designed but not followed, they can create many problems for the writer, reader and the entire situation as well. Therefore, before sending the message, it should be seen whether the schedule was followed or not. If not, then the document should be proofread thoroughly to avoid certain deficiencies in the message.

3.3 DRAFT AND FINALISE YOUR DOCUMENT

More often, drafting is part of planning. During the writing process, which may be a letter, application, proposal, or report, new ideas can come to the mind of the writer. Such new ideas are very important because they come to the mind with unconscious deep thinking. The writer incorporates these ideas into the message. So many changes occur during drafting, which the writer has to modify and remodify in order to finalise the document. In the end, finishing touches are important because if the document is sent without revision, it may be an embarrassment to the writer or the company. So the writer needs to address the following requirements:

3.3.1 Research to Discover Information

In some cases, the writer does not know about the topic as he/she has been directed by the head to write it. In such situations, the writer is blind and helpless because, without comprehensive information, writing a message is never easy. He/she may consult the boss and learn about the topic and requirements. Often, it is taken in some companies as a negative attempt and the writer is understood as an incompetent person. So, the writer should bring all the necessary information on the table, which can be beneficial for the message and make sure he/she has gathered sufficient information through which he/she can document a reasonable document.

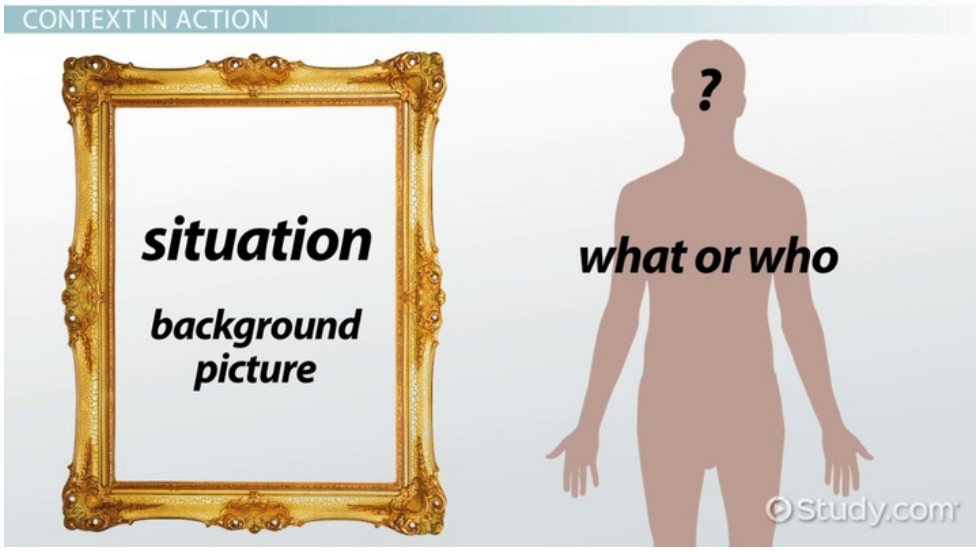
3.3.2 Design Your Information to Help Your Reader

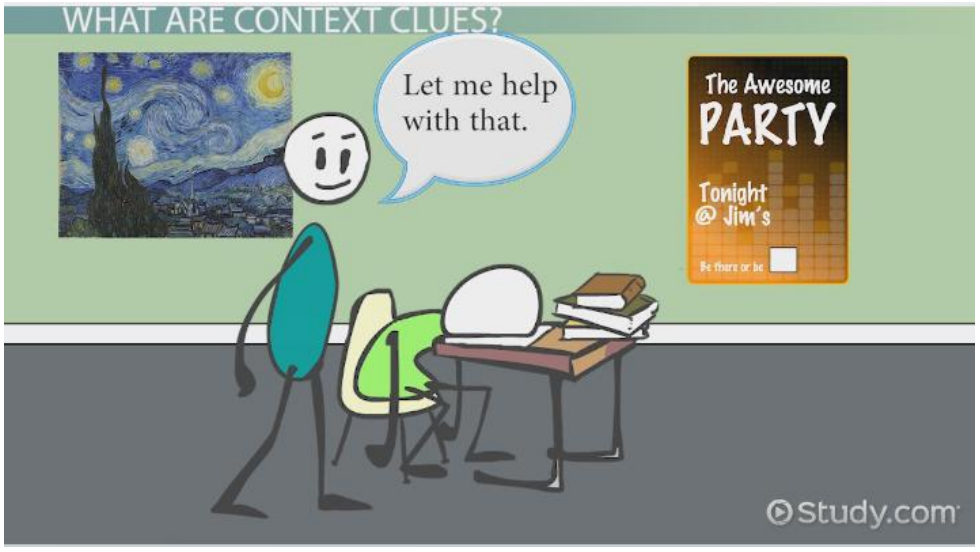
It is important to use a proper format since every organisation has a different format developed or followed by any other organisation's format, which may be considered a standard format. After deciding on the format of the message, the information should be signed by the technical writer. A deductive approach is used for a receptive audience and an inductive writing approach used for the traditional type of reader. Moreover, requirements of a national organisation are quite different compared to those of a global organisation. The writer has to design the information gathered with great effort. Designing the information out of a large amount of material is, no doubt, a challenging task. The purpose of designing the information is to benefit the reader, otherwise, it would be a herculean task to sort out the information by the reader and understand it.

3.3.3 Use Context-Setting Introductions

Context-setting introductions of the writer may help the reader to grasp the details. The writer may assist readers in three ways as follows: The writer can define the terms and make them easy to understand since the purpose of communication is not to influence the readers, showing expression of scholarly personality rather, it is a

process of exchange of ideas, emotions and feelings to others; the writer has to tell the reader the cause of writing the message and if the writer has become successful in transferring this information to the reader and is convinced, then half of the job is done. When he understands the cause of writing, he/she may follow the rest of the things easily; and what is the main purpose which this document demands, and the writer wants to achieve and if this third factor is not intimated to the reader, it is considered a loss and is against the spirit of the technical writing process.





3.3.4 Place Important Material at the Top

Placing material is a very important step and placing important material is another important task the writer has to do. Thus, it is advisable for more important material to be written at the top. In technical communication, it is considered a deductive approach that may start with the major purpose of the writing of the message. Sometimes, it happens that more important information is put in the middle of the message or somewhere before or after it and the reader has to work hard to detect the major information. This creates inconvenience for the reader. Irritation and negativity may lead to refusal or rejection of the message. Sometimes, buffer statements are written, which means that these statements are neutral and are written at the beginning of the message to avoid the negative response of the skeptical readers or to avoid negative intensity of the writer's message, which may be in the form of refusals of other requests or complaints of the writer. Otherwise, important information should be written at the top, at the beginning to get the attention of the reader.

3.3.5 Use Repetition and Sequencing

Repetition of words and expressions in any written or oral communication is never suggested but here, repetition means keywords or phrases from the preview list. The second term used in this heading is sequencing, which refers to the use of keywords in the same order as in the list.

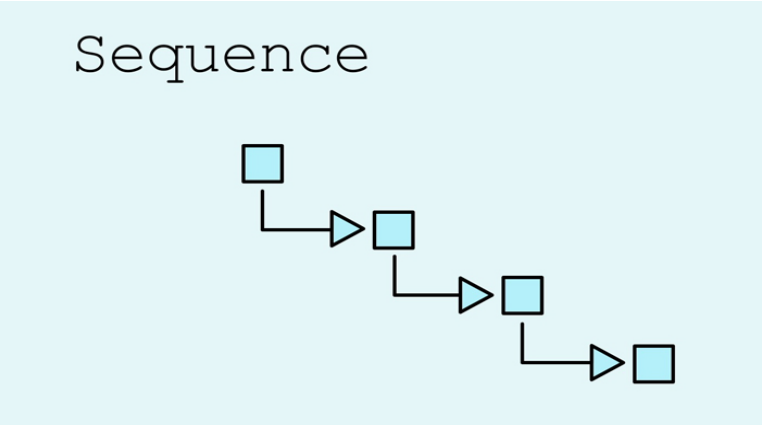


Figure: GCFLearnFree - GCFGlobal

The purpose of such repetitions and sequencing is to make the document more understandable and if the reader is a busy person and has to go through the document, then he/she may understand the overall gist of the message. However, over-repetition is never acceptable, and creates a monotonous impression on the reader. Since the basic aim of writing is to convey the message to the audience,

therefore, only those strategies should be adopted, which can create a positive impression of the writer otherwise, they should be avoided.

3.3.6 Use Coordinate Structures

Understanding the structure of the document is very essential for the reader because once he/she has followed the logic in the structure, he/she will behave positively. This is why international organisations pay thousands of dollars to technical writers who understand the pros and cons of writing and have a grip over adopting and changing, modifying, or re-modifying structures of documents. However, within the paragraphs, there should be sequencing and good sentential organisation. A simple formula for the preparation of a document text is that it should start with the introduction, followed by the explanation, descriptions, and illustrations of figures if required and then close with appealing sentences to initiate the desired actions.

3.4 EDITING

Editing means developing a consistent and accurate text. It is the process of correction, concentration, organisation, and many other adjustments performed with the intention of fabricating an exact, steady, correct and comprehensive work. In publishing, there are numerous editorial positions. Characteristically, one finds editorial assistants writing to senior-level editorial staff and directors, who report to senior executive editors. Senior executive editors are responsible for developing a product for its final release. The smaller the publication, the more these roles overlap.

Figure: Black and white tech writing solutions – WordPress.com

In this stage, you refine your document until everything is correct. You are looking for surface, consistency problems. You check spelling, punctuation, basic grammar, the format of the page and accuracy of facts. You make the text agree with various rules of presentation. When you edit, ask, is this correct? Is this consistent? In general, you edit by constructing checklists. A key item to create for you is a set of quality benchmarks. Widely used in industry, benchmarks are quality standards used to judge a product. To edit effectively, you must set similar benchmarks for your work. Typically, benchmarks are divided into categories with statements of quality levels. Below is a simple benchmark set for a web document created early in a college technical writing course.

Style Design

- No spelling or grammar errors

Information Design

- Title appears
- Introduction appears: The introduction tells the point of document and, if it is long, sections of the document.
- Body sections are structured similarly.in type and depth of points.

Page Design

- Fonts are standard roman, and large enough to be readable.
- Heads appear and indicate the subject of the section.

Visual Design

- Visuals appear to support a point in the text or provide a place for the text to begin.
- Visuals are effectively sized, captioned and referenced.

Navigation Design

- Every link works.
- Link size and placement indicate the type of content (e.g., return to homepage or major section of the document) that it connects to.
- Links provide helpful paths through the work.

Constructing checklists of typical problems is a helpful strategy. The key is to work on only one type of problem at a time. For example, first read for apostrophes, then for spelling errors, then for heading consistency, then for consistency in format and so forth. Typical areas to review include a paragraph. Indicators (indented? space above?); heads (every one of each level treated the same?); figure captions (all treated the same?); and punctuation (for instance, the handling of dashes).

The following paragraphs demonstrate the types of decisions that you make when you edit. The goal is to correct errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and consistency in presentation. Version 1 is the original, while version 2 is the edited one.

Version 1

Technical Reports (Original Version)

The detailed technical report to upper management will be submitted at the end of the project. It must explain;

1. the purpose of the machine,
2. its operation,
3. and the operation of its subsystems,
4. Assembly methods will also be presented.

It will also include all design calculations for loads, stresses, velocities and accelerations. Justification for the choice of materials of subsystems. An example might be the rationale for using plastic rather than steel and using a mechanical linkage compared to a hydraulic circuit. The report also details the cost of material and parts.

- Unclear topic sentence
- List elements are inconsistent
- Sentence fragment “an” indicates one example, but two appear
- Misused semicolon
- Vertical list misemphasises contents

Version 2

Technical Reports (Edited Version)

The technical report to upper management, submitted at the end of the project, contains several sections. The report explains:

1. The machine's purpose and operation;
2. The operation of its subsystems and methods to assemble it. It also includes all design calculations for loads, stresses, velocities, and accelerations, as well as justification for the choice of materials in sub-systems. Examples of this justification include the rationale for using plastic rather than steel and a comparison between a mechanical linkage and a hydraulic circuit. The report also details the cost of material and parts.

- Clear topic sentence
- List consistent
- Two examples suggested
- Complete sentence

3.4.1 Producing the Document

Once the document is complete, it needs revision and correction. Headings are arranged, and sub-headings organised and numbered. Using a computer checker, the writer has already corrected most of the mistakes but still, it needs attention because numerous mistakes should be corrected otherwise, they may create a negative impression of the writer. Thus, producing a document is a very challenging and careful job, which needs the proper attention of the producer (writer).

Producing a document involves the physical completion of the typing or printing of the final document. This stage takes energy and time. Failure to plan enough time for physical completion and its inevitable problems will certainly cause frustration. Many people have discovered the difficulties that can plague this stage when their hard drive crashes or their printer fails. Although physical completion is usually a minor factor in brief papers, in longer documents, it often takes more time than the drafting stage.

(i) Worksheet for Editing

Make a checklist of possible problems.

a. Head format (does each level look the same?)
b. Typographical items (for example, are all dashes formed the same way?)
c. Handling of lists
d. Handling of the beginning of paragraphs (for example, are they all indented five spaces?)
e. References to figures
f. Spelling
g. Grammar
h. Consistent word use

(ii) Editing with A Word Processor

As you work to achieve consistency that is the goal of the finishing stage, you can use style aids. Style aids are word processing features that highlight errors in standard usage. The two most common are spell checkers and grammar checkers (Kru11). A spell checker indicates words in your document that are not in its dictionary. If you have made a typo, such as typing with, the checker highlights the word and allows you to retype it. Most spell checkers have an autocorrect feature. Once you engage it (check your programme's instructions), it will automatically change every mistake, such as “the” to “the”. However, these programmes have problems: If your typo happens to be another Word Suet as a fist for first—the programme does not highlight it. Also, if you misuse a word, such as to instead of too, the programme does not detect such error.

The grammar checker indicates many stylistic problems, not just faulty grammar. Checkers detect such problems as subject-verb, disagreement, fragments and comma splices. `Checkers also can detect features of your writing, for instance, the checker might highlight all `the forms of your paper thus, pointing out all places where you may have used the passive voice. Checkers can also highlight words that could be interpreted as sexist or racist; that are overused, or that are easily confused. Thus, 'the Checker' will highlight every your and you're, but you must decide whether you have used the correct form.
Follow these guidelines:

- Use your spell checker;
- Set your spell checker to "AutoCorrect";
- Use your grammatical checker for your key problems. (If you have trouble, for example, with fragments or passive voice, set the checker to find only those items); and
- After using the spelling and grammar checkers, proofread to find any "OK, but wrong words, for example, 'their' used for 'there' or 'luck' used for 'link'.

3.5 WRITING PROPOSAL

A proposal letter consists of identifying a problem, proposing a solution and providing evidence that implementing the proposal will achieve its goal. Common goals include making a task easier, improving the efficiency of a process, increasing workforce effectiveness, or saving company time, money, or aggravation. Saving the company from aggravation may sound frivolous, but everything from government fines to potential lawsuits can reduce profit margins, slow down production owing to more rigorous inspections or even resulting in jail time for improprieties.

In its initial stages, the letter follows a simple proposal format. When you ask, "What is a proposal letter?", you should already know that even in a paperless office, you do not send your proposal as an email. You create a formal letter and save it to whichever cloud storage option your company favours. Begin the document as you would when sending any other formal correspondence: with the heading.

Just as you would in a formal, external letter to a business, use a left-justified, block-style heading and body. Use your name and job title, along with your department name, instead of the name of your business and your company mailing address. Skip a line and write the date, using a month/day/year format for your American corporate office or a day/month/year format for any overseas offices.

Skip another line and write your recipient's name and job title along with their department name. Follow that by stating the problem, from the mundane: "We need an ice machine in the employee break room", to more serious concerns, such as, "Suggested modifications to our current 'active shooter' training module for new staff members."

3.5.1 Planning Your Proposal

(i) Define Your Audience

You need to make sure that you think about your audience and what they might already know or not know about your topic before you begin writing. This will help you focus your ideas and present them in the most effective way. It is a good idea to assume that your readers will be busy, reading (or even skimming) in a rush and not predisposed to grant your ideas any special consideration.

- Who will be reading your proposal? What level of familiarity with your topic will they have? What might you need to define or give extra background information about?
- What do you want your audience to get from your proposal? What do you need to give your readers so that they can make the decision you want them to make?
- Refine your tone to meet your audience's expectations and desires. What do they want to hear? What would be the most effective way of getting through to them? How can you help them understand what you're (contractions are not used in formal writing) trying to say?

(ii) Define Your Issue

It is clear to you what the issue is, but is that also clear to your reader? Also, does your reader believe you know what you are talking about? You can support your ethos, or writing persona, by using evidence and explanations throughout the proposal to back up your assertions. By setting your issue properly, you start convincing the reader that you are the right person to take care of it. Think about the following when you plan this part:

- What is the situation this issue applies to?
- What are the reasons behind this?
- Are we sure that those, and not the others, are the real reasons? How are we sure of it?
- Has anyone ever tried to deal with this issue before?
- If yes, has it worked? Why?
- If no, why not?

Use your summary to show that you have conducted in-depth research to evaluate and understand the issue. Include only information that is the most relevant to your topic and avoid writing a summary that is obvious to anyone in the field.

(iii) Define Your Solution

This should be straightforward and easy to understand. Once you set the issue you are addressing, how would you like to solve it? Get it as narrow (and doable) as possible.

- Your proposal needs to define a problem and offer a solution that will convince uninterested and skeptical readers to support it. Your audience may not be the easiest crowd to win over. Is the solution you are offering logical and feasible? What is the timeline for your implementation?
- Consider thinking about your solution in terms of objectives. Your primary objective is the goal that you absolutely must achieve with your project. Secondary objectives are other goals that you hope your project achieves.
- Another helpful way of thinking about your solution is in terms of "outcomes" and "deliverables". Outcomes are the quantifiable results of your objectives. For example, if your proposal is for a business project and your objective is to "increase profit", an outcome might be "increase profit by $100,000". Deliverables are products or services that you will deliver with your project. For example, a proposal for a science project could "deliver" a vaccine or a new drug. Readers of proposals look for outcomes and deliverables because they are easy ways of determining what the "worth" of the project will be.

(iv) Keep Elements of Style in Mind

Depending on your proposal and who will be reading it, you need to cater for your paper to fit a certain style. What do they expect? Are they interested in your problem?

- How are you going to be persuasive? Convincing proposals can use emotional appeals, but should always rely on facts as the bedrock of the argument. For example, a proposal to start a panda conservation programme could mention how sad it would be for children of future generations to never see a panda again, but it should not stop there. It would need to base its argument on facts and solutions for the proposal to be convincing.
- Avoid writing in jargon and using obscure abbreviations or needlessly complex language. Instead, write in plain, direct language as much as possible.

For example, instead of saying "rectification of a workplace imbalance," you could simply write, "let employees go".

(v) Make an Outline

This will not be part of the final proposal, but will help you organise your thoughts. Make sure you know all the relevant details before you start. Your outline should consist of your problem, your solution, how you will solve it, why your solution is best and a conclusion. If you are writing an executive proposal, you will need to include things like a budget analysis and organisational details.

3.5.2 External Proposal

External proposals are written outside an organisation by state and local governments, public agencies, education, and the industry as a response to large and small corporations requested for various purposes. These proposals are highly formal. They may range from 4-5 pages up to 100 pages or more depending on the nature of the project or issue. For example, British airline often requests several large corporations to solicit proposals for specific equipment. In the same way, government agencies request contractors to send them proposals for numerous types of construction projects. Moreover, NGOs also send concerned people, groups, or institutions to submit proposals for welfare programmes, including community development, social welfare, women rights, teacher training and many more. Higher education Commission requests universities to submit proposals for faculty development programmes and language development programmes. NRPU projects are offered to university professors to submit proposals through their ORIC directorates to address certain educational issues in different fields of sciences, social sciences, management sciences, commerce, arts and humanities. Proposals are received by concerned organisations/firms and they are referred to experts of the relevant fields. They scrutinise the proposals and then most appropriate proposals on updated ideas are recommended and financial grants approved for endorsed proposals.

(i) Planning for External Proposals

Planning a proposal is the basic step that can enable the proposal writer to write it effectively so that it may be accepted by concerned experts and authorities. The two steps discussed below should be considered in the planning of proposals.

(a) Consider the audience

The writer should speculate about the intended audience, who is supposed to accept or reject the proposal. In this regard, the expectations of the audience regarding the proposals should be mentioned. The level of their expertise also needs careful consideration in planning proposals. Moreover, the writer needs to understand that his/her proposal will not be the only one that may be accepted or rejected because if it is the only proposal, then its chances of acceptance are higher. But the case is always different because such proposal has to compete with others and chances of its acceptance get reduced. Therefore, the quality of the idea, relevant formatting, clear expenditure and effective work are the focal points for the acceptance of a proposal.

(b) Research the situation

The proposal writer should keep in mind the need of the audience and features of the product. This can be done by interviewing the customer or by reading their printed material. Similarly, the writer should clear the effectiveness of the underlying issue and its benefits for the audience if he/she is proposing a new idea in case of open offers for the proposals.

(ii) Writing an External Proposal

To write an external proposal, follow the form for writing proposals. The main parts of a proposal are: an executive summary; technical; managerial; and financial selections.

(a) Writing an executive summary

The executioner contains information designed to convince executives that the proposers should receive the contract. In a lengthy external proposal, this summary might be 10 to 15 pages long, summarising the sections inlay, not technical, terms. Often, these summaries read like magazine articles, artfully designed, to sell the proposal. In external proposals, this section should be a proportional reduction of the body. It should present the contents of the technical, managerial and financial sections in clear terms. This section is often designed to make nontechnical people feel comfortable with the proposal.

(b) Writing the technical section

A proposal's technical section begins by stating the problem to be solved. The proposers must demonstrate that they understand what the customer desires. The proposal should describe the problem present in a preliminary design for the product, if one is receded. Sometimes, the firm offers alternative methods for solving the problem and invites the proposal writer to select one.

(c) Writing the management section

The management section describes the personnel who will work directly on the project. The customer wants to know that the project will receive top priority, and the 'proposal writer must respond by' explaining what technical-personnel and levels of management will be responsible for the project's success. In a large external proposal, this section often contains organisation charts and resumes. In a short proposal, this section usually explains the qualifications of personnel, the firm's success with other similar projects and its willingness to service the product, provide technical assistance and train employees. This section also includes a schedule for the project sometimes, with deadlines for phases of the project.

(d) Waiting for the financial section

The financial section provides a breakdown of the costs for every item in the proposal. Often, this section is not just a table of costs. At times, a brief introduction and the table may be all you need, but if you need to explain the source or significance of certain figures, then do so.

3.5.3 Internal Proposal

Proposals that staff members and consultants submit to your company provide lifeblood, whether you run a for-profit business or not. The main categories of proposals include solicited or unsolicited, formal or informal and internal or external. Although each type has its strengths and weaknesses, the internal proposal usually results in lower costs for investment, interpretation and implementation than a solicited external proposal.

Internal proposals often retain much of the formality of a solicited, external proposal. But one advantage of an internal proposal arises from the fact that the person writing the proposal and the intended recipient share common experiences and have a similar understanding of industry terms.

(i) Who Should Write an Internal Proposal?

While anyone can write an internal proposal, not everyone should. The person who first recognises the existence of a problem sets the process in motion by expressing the need for solutions. Avoid the temptation to view this person as an instigator or a complainer. Putting a problem into words allows co-workers and supervisors the opportunity to evaluate the situation and decide whether to ignore the issue, seek other employment, or join the instigator and generate potential solutions. If you hold that supervisory position and notice that turnover has gone out of control, take note. If you notice that fewer applicants are interviewed with you after every new job posting, swallow your pride.

(ii) Writing Effective Internal Business Proposals

Among the many sources for a simple proposal format or an external proposal sample are universities, grant review panels, business magazines and trade journals. Not only will you find an endless supply of ready-made templates, but you will discover numerous helpful videos as well. Take time to watch them and read their transcripts, when available.

The mistaken belief that perfection outranks choosing a course of action leads many companies to fail. Thus, it is more important to put your ideas out there than to sit on them waiting for them to feel like they have matured beyond faultlessness. Every good suggestion helps the company grow and hopefully earns your recognition.

(a) Check for errors

Examine every word, sentence and paragraph of the entire proposal. Look for missing punctuation, or copy-pasted boilerplate and non-inclusive language. Propose the best piece of writing it can be. Check for its completeness and ensure that implementing the recommendations will be feasible and not lead to any unintended consequences.

How will you know when your proposal should pass muster? Treat it like a dissertation. Whether you have ever defended your own or you have simply absorbed the steps of the process, treat every proposal you submit like a masterpiece. Pick over every word, and look for misspellings, poor grammar and weak phrasing.

(b) Create an exit strategy

No matter how well-intended, every new policy results in unplanned consequences. Include extensive documentation detailing any potential negative effects of any new policy on the recruitment and retention of new employees. Consider creating something that meets the needs of every employee, from the Chief Executive Officer to the assistant janitor. Include the possibility of using stock options and 401(k) matches or on-site day-care services and gym memberships to offset any drawbacks. In short, every benefit under the sun should hit the negotiating table, including paid leave for new parents and adult caregivers alike.

(c) Get everyone on board

If you do not include all stakeholders in the entire process, from framing the problem to anticipating any unintended consequences on the rank and file, your business risks excessive employee turnover. Encourage employees who gripe the loudest to put their complaints in writing, alongside three solutions they wish to implement. Task complainers with creating and administering formal surveys to gauge the popularity and feasibility of each solution with current employees and customers. Have this survey squad seek three cost estimates for any workspace retrofits, necessary training hours, or the recruiting and on boarding of new employees. Include estimates for lost work time due to the learning curve.

(d) Revise and refine

No solution fits every situation. Once the new policy rolls out, hold open comment sessions. Provide suggestion boxes for the shy and filter the volume from those who have no hesitation or embarrassment with sharing their opinions loudly. Make sensible adjustments and renew feedback-seeking sessions. Keep making tweaks and maintain transparency throughout the entire process. The boost to company productivity and profitability makes the entire process worth every ounce of effort.

(f) Sample Internal Proposals

PROPOSAL

Computer training for office staff

To: The Director of ICT, AIOU
From: Dr Shamim Ali
Subject: LMS training for staff
Date: Jan 01, 2020

Purpose

Many courses in the university or school make use of a web-based teaching and learning environment called Learning Management System (LMS). We can see the number of courses making use of LMS increases in the past 10 years because LMS is an instructional resource tool used on the internet to provide distance learning courses. We wish to conduct LMS training for Staff so that they will know how to handle this software on their desktops. A learning management system delivers and tracks educational and training content online. E-learning tools include customisable content and mobile lessons. It creates an educational workflow that makes sense for different environments, including blended learning.

Problem

Learning materials are delivered online, online assignment submissions, discussion forum, etc. AIOU is spending more money on overtime for office staff, processing and handling data manually. LMS will reduce the cost of paper, postage and travel. We understand the importance of university efficiency and reducing costs. The institution is already spending many thousands of rupees on instructor fees and administrative costs. The system will help them reduce such costs. For instance, automate the registration and online payment system. Staff are not handling daily roll calls, making workshop bills, handling tutorials, managing assignments and synopsis. They still use the desktop to compute bills and manual reports of inventory, thus, the processing of data is very slow. The office staff does not use LMS to manage reports, such as computing payroll, monitoring inventory and printing reports.

Solution

Provide LMS training for staff to be proficient in using a computer, such as training for Microsoft Word and Excel. In this way, staff will be able to know how to automate their work using LMS.

Benefits

There are many advantages of using LMS as indicated below.

- Keeping records in an organised manner and serving as a substitute for filing.
- Handling online classes easily and accurately.
- Monitoring workshops and tutors in regions.
- Preparing, uploading and grading assignments on time in an organised manner.
- Producing reports in an easy way.
- Automating computation of daily attendance.
- Collecting useful data from students, tutors, results and advisement information. The report can be used for accreditation and validation purposes.

Articulating the standards by which students' performance will be evaluated effectively. This will help increase, enroll and retain top-performing students since the system provides fast and accurate options to get the latest information, which can help measure and handle the impact of system training initiatives.

The system uses the most notable feature Web 2.0 interface, which makes tutors easy to navigate when adding content to an online course and students easily navigate when accessing course content.

Allow tutors to store module materials on a user-specific library. Tutors could copy, move, modify and remove files from this library into any of their module websites, making it very easy for them to develop their content and copy it among websites. It also makes it easier for administrators, who currently do content-copying manually.

Cost Saving

AIOU spends Rs 25, 0000 a month on overtime for Accounting staff. Imagine if AIOU does not pay for overtime, the institution can save so much money.

Conclusion

I believe that if our employees become proficient in LMS, their work will be easier and there will no need for overtime and AIOU will save money.

Dr. Shamim Ali
Assistant Professor
Department of English
AIOU

3.5.4 Checklist for Proposals

As you reread and revise your proposal, watch out for the following problems:

- Make sure you use the right format. Remember, the memo format is for internal proposals; the business-letter format is for proposals written from

one external organisation to another. (Whether you use a cover memo or cover letter, is your choice);

- Write a good introduction- state that this is a proposal and provide an overview of the contents of the proposal;
- Make sure to identify exactly what you are proposing to do;
- Make sure that a report a written document is somehow involved in the project you are proposing to do. Remember that in this TCM 1603 course, we are trying to do two things: write a proposal and plan a term-report project;
- Make sure the sections are in a logical, natural order. For example, do not hit the audience with schedules and costs before getting them interested in the project;
- Break out the costs section into specifics; include hourly rates and other such details. Do not just hit them with a whopping big final cost;
- For internal projects, do not omit the section on costs and qualifications: there will be costs, just not direct ones. For example, how much time will you need, will there be printing, binding costs? Include your qualifications imagine your proposal will go to somebody in the organisation who does not know you;
- Be sure and address the proposal to the real or realistic audience not your instructor. (You can use your instructor's name as the CEO or supervisor of the organisation you are sending the proposal to);
- Watch out for generating technobabble. Yes, some of your proposal readers may know the technical side of your project but others may not. Challenge yourself to bring difficult technical concepts down to a level that non-specialists can understand; and
- Be sure to include all information listed in "Special assignment requirements". If it does not logically or naturally fit in the proposal itself, put it in a memo to your instructor.

3.6 SUMMARISING

Summaries guide readers about the important points derived from large reports or articles. In today's busy world, readers do not have sufficient time to go through lengthy documents rather, they need to get a gist of an entire long manuscript and the summaries provide this facility to them. Later, when they are free, they can read the whole document. Therefore, as a writer of an article or document, you have to write summaries, or sometimes, you need to summarise other people's documents.

3.6.1 Definitions of Summaries and Abstracts

Vaughan (1991) states that abstracts and summaries are short restatements of other documents. A summary restates the main findings, methods, conclusions and other important data found in a document. In an organisation, readers have to read many

types of reports within an organisation and an executive summary is written for their facilitation. These summaries are presented before the main body of long reports. On the other hand, an abstract is the mini version of the long article of a journal or the entire MPhil/PhD thesis. Abstracts are either indicative or informative. The former type of abstracts list the document's topics and the latter type of abstracts present short versions of the document's qualitative and quantitative information. Mostly, abstracts usually mention the article's purpose, data, methodologies, results and conclusion.

3.6.2 Audience of Summaries and Abstracts

Every type of communication has an intended audience and the communicator should analyse the reader. For summaries, mostly, the audience is a businessman, manager, chairperson, director, coordinator, or any other related authorised person whereas, the audience for a research article may be a research scholar, students, intellectuals, theorists, or researchers. According to the level required, summaries and articles are prepared.

3.6.3 Planning Summaries

To plan summaries and articles, the writer has to understand the structuralising strategies as indicated below.

- Main points, terms and concepts should be found.
- Determine the extent to which the detail is required.
- Main divisions of the document should be determined.
- Key statements should be identified.
- Overall purpose stating sentences should be developed.
- Main sentences should be chosen, which can present ideas of each paragraph.
- The detail, which can support the main ideas, should be included.

Mostly, there is a general rule to write summaries or abstracts; both these parts should be one-tenth of the whole document. In other words, if the document consists of 100 pages, then the summary or the abstract should be of 10 pages. However, an article may vary in a range of length usually according to the guidelines provided by a journal's technical or management committee.

3.6.4 Writing Summaries

There should be certain sections of the summary of a report. A long report requires the preliminary section, body of the report and supplementary sections. The preliminary and supplementary sections are part of the whole long report. However, the writer has to write a summary of the body of the long report. Thus, the one-page should be specified for the introduction, which includes the background of the issue

discussed in the report, the purpose of writing the report and the significance of the report. Moreover, brief related literature, the methodology adopted, data collection, data analysis in a brief form, results and conclusion are written in a concise but comprehensive manner. Summary writing requires special writing and technical skills along with a desirable standard level of language.

3.6.5 Worksheet for Summarising

- Read over the article or report, the writer intends to summarise.
- The audience should be analysed for writing the summary.
- The writer should be clear about the extent to which the audience already knows the topic.
- How the audience will use the summary? Experts need the name of the people, companies and their understanding of the common jargon of the field.
- The writer should understand, whether the audience needs an overview of the report and they will make any specific decisions based on the content of the report or not.
- The writer should mark all the keywords and phrases.
- He/she should organise all the words and phrases into groups or clusters.
- He/she should write a sentence, in the beginning, stating the main point he/she wants to convey.
- The body of the summary should be written by using groups or clusters created for writing.

3.7 DEFINING

Definitions provide different concepts that help readers understand the whole phenomenon under consideration. The traditional way to define a term is to place a term in a familiar class and explain that it is different from other members of related classes. A definition is highly skilled work and needs specific vocabulary to be added up and give every related term a particular place to make the definition more vivid and understandable. There are two different types of definitions as follows:

3.7.1 Simple Definitions

Simple definitions are included in the list of definitions that focus on a particular gadget or concept. For example, a computer is defined as an electronic machine used to work on certain appliances for different functions. In the same way, a camera is defined as a device used for taking photographs.

3.7.2 Extended Definitions

Extended definitions are included in the list of definitions that focus on concepts and compare and contrast strategies, which are explained for them. Moreover, what effects the related concepts have and what causes they exert on other related things. Similarly, other concerned elements are also included in the extended definitions.

3.7.3 Creating Formal Definitions

A formal definition is a statement consisting of three parts. For example, the term that requires defining, the class to which the item belongs and the differentiation of the item from all other members of the class. In creating a definition, the most important part is differentiation, which requires four common methods, for instance:

- Naming the essential properties, which means involving the characteristic features possessed by all individuals of the type;
- Explanation of what it does, which means stating its function;
- In the case of defining the object, composition material and its shape is described; and
- If the definable term is a process, then it needs to be explained how it is made and what work or function it performs.

3.7.4 Creating Informal Definitions

In the case of writing specialised or technical terms that the readers do not know, the writer should provide informal definitions because formal definitions still have a chance to create ambiguity for the reader. There are two types of definitions: operational definitions; and synonyms.

(i) Operational Definitions

This type of definition gives the sense or meaning of an abstract word instead of a concrete word for a specific time or place. Such definitions are mostly given by scientists or managers to provide measurable meaning to abstractions for clarity. This type of definition creates a test for discriminating in one particular circumstance.

(ii) Synonyms

Most readers are not familiar with the main topic and if it is dealt with formally, they cannot understand the concept given. This is why writers should give words synonymous to the formal term. For example, cardboard is a word for which every reader may be familiar with, but f-flute corrugated is another formal word, which generally, people are not familiar with. Thus, highly formal words and phrases can create a negative effect on readers because of the ambiguous nature of some terms,

therefore, it is advisable for writers to provide near-synonyms to a term, which should be simple, are in daily use and easily understandable for every common reader.

3.7.5 Planning Your Definitions

Planning is a highly desirable activity that should be performed before providing definitions to readers. The main purpose of every type of writing is the facilitation to the reader, so if the writing terms are easily defined, it will bring a very positive effect, if not, then it can bring negative effects. The ultimate result may be loss of money and wastage of time put on this activity. In this respect, planning is a very useful activity for defining. The first thing in planning is to consider your audience's level of knowledge and the amount of detail they need in the current situation. The audience may not be acquainted with the term at all or he/she may not be focused on any particular definition from the possible various other meanings you are intended to. For example, often, acronyms create difficulty in understanding so, for an audience with less knowledge, the acronyms are explained. Similarly, the writer should go through the whole document and if he/she finds any difficulty with certain terms, they should be defined for the audience. If a reader is reading a paragraph of a report and understands every term, then he/she will proceed smoothly in reading but if he/she finds some new terms, which are not defined properly or if defined, they have been defined in a highly formal way. The reader may stop reading or if he/she continues, then understanding will be poor, ultimately affecting certain decisions for which the audience was planning to take on. Thus, planning is an essential step in every kind of writing and, especially, in defining specific terms or concepts.

3.8 WORKSHEET FOR DEFINING

- Name the audience for the definition.
- Understand their current level of knowledge about a certain object or concept.
- Determine the goal you have for your readers. In other words, how they will use your definition.
- The writer should select a method of defining; simple, extended, informal, or formal.
- For informal definitions, the writer should choose synonyms or operational definitions for clarity.

- For extended definitions, the writer should select a method or methods that enable the reader to grasp the new information. Material for new information provided should facilitate the reader's prior knowledge.

- If required, a visual aid should be used to convey the meaning of the concept.

3.8.1 Describing

Certain concepts need description and, in technical writing, description of some terms, concepts, or machines is very important. A technical writer has to describe various things to provide in-depth detail and clarity of related terms, words, phrases, or statements. For example, if the writer needs to describe an object, he/she should describe the size, weight, shape, colour, material, cost and function of the object. Therefore, describing is a highly significant process on the part of the writer, which should preferably be adopted.

3.8.2 Planning the Mechanism of Description

The basic purpose of mechanism of description is to create confidence in the audience that he/she is fully understanding the concept given in the report or abstract. The following are important things for the planning of a mechanism of description:

- Describe some important points of the object or concept because for the description of an object or concept, it is not possible to describe every minute detail;

- Various key parts of an object or concept should be taken into consideration;

- The functions of an object or concept should be given due attention for description;

- The audience should be considered;

- The level of prior knowledge of the audience should also be considered;

- The way through which the facilitation can be provided to the audience must be realised;

- The writer should select an organisational principle;

- He/she should choose appropriate visual aids; and

- He/she should adopt the usual form for writing description.

3.8.3 Worksheet for Planning Description

- Name the audience for description.
- Estimate the level of their knowledge about the concepts for which this description is based and about the topic itself.
- The writer should set a goal for his/her audience.
- He/she should select an approach. For example, the writer has to decide what he/she will write in each paragraph. Moreover, what extraordinary detail will be provided for the audience.
- Appropriate visual aid should be planned. The size of visual aids should be decided. Construct rough visual aids and develop them later.
- Devise a style sheet and decide how you will handle heads, margins, paragraphing and visual aid captions.
- For a description of mechanisms, the writer should name each part, and sub-part, define each part and sub-part, list details of size, weight, method of attachment and so forth, and indicate their function.
- He/she should write a description of processes, including the naming of each step, naming each sub-step, telling its end goal, list details of quality and quantity of the action and indicate the significance of the action as well.

3.9 REFERENCES

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Unit–4

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION STYLE

Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

Reviewer: Ms Farah Saeed

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INTRODUCTION

The focal point of Unit 4 is technical communication style. It can be defined as the communication mode adopted according to the target audience, context and the resolution of the technical communication. Thus, the technical communication style can be both formal and informal. Without knowing how to address the target audience with a suitable style, the technical communication will be a total failure. Keeping this particular point this unit has been written to equip you, Dear Students, with the knowledge as well as skills of technical communication style. It will help you learn writing clear sentences and paragraphs, using active and passive voice, according to the requirement, as well as utilizing ethics and style in technical writing. This learning will assist you in understanding the biases in language as well as how to avoid them. In addition to it, this unit also describes how wordiness in writing, choppy sentences, noun clusters and redundant phrases create problems in effective technical writing. Henceforth, in order to provide you with a whole package of technical communication style, comprehensive sections are included on employment of Parallelism, and on relative association between globalization and style. It is very important, to cut short, for you to know to learn and use the appropriate styles (formal and informal) to address the specific people in technical communication irrespective of the spoken or written media. Therefore, it is hoped that you will like to go through this unit with interest and motivation to equip yourself with this basic kit of technical communication.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Acquire the basic principles of technical writing styles;
2. Write clear sentences and paragraphs;
3. Find out the ethics and style in technical writing;
4. Understand the biases in language;
5. Learn to avoid the biases in writing;

6. Learn globalization and style;

7. Use active vs. passive voice;

8. Learn employment of Parallelism,

9. Describe how wordiness in writing, choppy sentences, noun clusters and redundant phrases create problems in effective writing; and

10. Learn the strategies to make sentences clear for understanding of the readers.

4.1 CLARITY OF SENTENCES FOR READERS

The clarity in written expression comes with clear thinking. The writer's clarity of purpose, audience, medium selection, time allocation, and information collection and provision are the indicators to make him clear for writing any message. This clarity helps the writer to write clearly. A sentence is a combination of words and phrases arranged in a certain way in a specific structure. If the writer is not competent to organize his thoughts according to the structure of the language in which he is writing the message, there will be no clarity in the sentence and then no clarity in the expression. Sometimes, the writers write in future tense about an action that has happened in the past. This will make the sentence (message) unclear. For example, the writer has received an order of pedestal fans and now he is writing about the delay in consignment delivery, he wants to inform the customer about this situation, and he starts the message with this sentence. Read the following sentences in boxes. He has made a wrong start in the sentence (a) while the clear sentence is (b)

a)	Dear Sir, I receive your about the late delivery of the message of the good and will inform you.

b)	Dear Sir, I have received your message recently and intend to inform you about the late delivery of the goods.

Such unclear sentences create inconvenience on the part of the reader and the message will lose the purpose of writing as well as it will create a bad impression of the writer on the reader. Sometimes, the writers pile up messages with unnecessary use of sentences that bury down the actual purpose of the writing and the reader has to fight with sentences to explore the actual message. Therefore, the writer should choose simple sentences and organize them in a logical sequence. Every sentence should have a natural flow of meaning and structure to convey a message in a clear way so that it should be understood by the reader and he will be able to respond quickly and appropriately.

4.1.1 Placement of Main Idea First

While writing a message, the main idea needs to be addressed first at the beginning of the message. There are certain ideas that require inclusion in a message. Unskilled writers put minor ideas first and try to strengthen this minor idea with relevant information. This can misguide the reader, and he thinks the minor ideas

more important which actually not the main purpose of the writer is. So, time and energy both are lost. The skilled technical writers place the main idea first. Sometimes, they must start their message with some neutral statements to avoid the anger of the traditional readers, but then they do not commit this mistake of writing minor ideas first. Instead, when the neutral statements come to an end, they bring the main idea in their message to get the attention of the reader.

4.1.2 Use of Normal Word Order

Normal word order is an order in which the simplicity of syntactic structure possesses the main focus. Wordy and flowery expressions do not bring positive response and they are not the need for a formal message. There are so many layers and levels of word order and normal word order is the demand for formal writing. The writer should encode the message by thinking that on the other side, the expected reader is a layman or an ordinary businessman who, no doubt, is an educated person but not a philosopher or academician because academic language requires a higher level of word order which includes very large sentences with various types of phrases and clauses, and if they are used in normal situations, they may not be understood. The technical writer also understands that the reader in today's era is a very busy person and if he does not follow the selected unnatural word order, how many problems may happen in this written communication.

4.1.3 Use of Active Voice Form

There are two ways of expression, the first one is the active voice form and the other is the passive voice form. Both forms are used in technical writing. But the purpose of the first one is to show intimacy and conversing with the audience as he is sitting in front of you and he is listening to your thoughts. This form is more subjective and is also used in written communication. However, in some written genres, passive voice form is used to show that a writer is an objective person and whatever is said, he is not using his own feelings and emotions. Instead, he is producing an objective document so what is said is more important than who is saying. Every language has its own active and passive structure. However, as most of our communication takes place in the English language so we should understand its active and passive forms. The English language follows the SVO pattern in active voice form. The subject is the doer of the action who comes first, at the beginning which follows verb and object who/which is the one the action is done on it, so it comes at the end of a sentence.

a) Active Voice Form

1. I am writing this letter…….
2. You have mailed us an invitation….
3. I assure you that Fair and Lovely is a miraculous cream…

b) Passive Voice Form

1. The letter is written….
2. An invitation has been mailed to us…
3. You are assured about the miracles of a cream…. Fair and Lovely

However, the use of active voice form in technical writing is a desirable decision because the writer is accepting the onus of probabilities and he is liable for any wrong and miscalculated information. It does not mean that all the time, the writer is bound to use active voice form, it depends upon the situation, if the expression requires passive voice, then it can also be used in written communication. The same is the case with the other languages, though they follow the different active voice and passive voice patterns, yet important is to follow the needs of the situation.

4.1.4 Employment of Parallelism

The parallelism of a sentence means the sentences of the same importance using a similar structure. This is done with the help of coordinate conjunctions; and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so. The following are the sentences as an example taken from Technical Report Writing Today by Daniel G. Riordan's ninth edition. (: colons should be with used, when we use following)

FaultyMy duties included coming in early in the morning and doing preparation work, cooking on the front line, trained new employees, and took inventory.

Parallel My duties included coming in early to do preparation work, cooking on the front line, training new employees, and taking inventory.

Faulty Typical writing situations include proposals, the sending of electronic mail, and how to update the system.

Parallel Typical writing situations include editing proposals, sending electronic mail, and updating the system.

4.1.5 A Suitable Length of a Sentence

A sentence length varies from a few words to dozens of words. The more the writing is for the lower level, the more the simple and short sentences are required. But for higher-level writing, the length of words increases. Moreover, one thing should always be in mind that there is no standard limit of words for any sentence. It changes from situation to situation. For example, if the idea demands little information, so the sentence will be short. On the other side, if the idea needs more information, then more words can be included in a sentence. However, it is at the discretion of the technical writer to choose whatever the number of words for a sentence might be. One thing is clear that when an idea or some ideas satisfy with

information and reflect that information is complete, there is no question of increasing the length of the sentence. For example:

Example 1: I am busy today.

Example 2: I am busy today and cannot accompany you.

Example 3: I am busy today and cannot accompany you to Karachi.

Example 4: I am busy today and cannot accompany you to Karachi because of the illness of my mother.

From the above examples, except for example one which looks incomplete and does not highlight why it is said that ‘I am busy today’. Similarly, it is also not mentioned what is the intention of the speaker/writer for saying/writing that ‘I am busy today’. This gets clear in example 2 that the speaker is not willing to accompany the audience. The first two examples still require some more information regarding the statement of the speaker that ‘I am busy today’. This required information completes the sentence when it is added with a prepositional phrase, 'to Karachi' in example 3. In the interactional social speech, unless you do not give the reason, it seems impolite to communicate with anyone. For this purpose, 'because of the illness of my mother’ fully completes the meaning of the speaker why he said that ‘I am busy’. Thus, the same case can be applied in any sentence. However, as too lengthy sentences cannot be grasped by the ordinary audience, a reasonable length should be given to a sentence that can convey the meaning easily and clearly.

4.1.6 Avoiding Nominalization

Nominalization is a process of restructuring a sentence with some changes in it. For example, instead of starting a sentence with a traditional subject, the sentence may be started with an adjective or abstract noun in the beginning. For example:

Example 1: Imran Khan decides to stop escalation in the region.

Example 2: Decision of Imran Khan on stopping escalation in the region.

Example 3: America is busy in peace talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Example 4: Peace talks between America and the Taliban

Figure 4.1: 3 Ways to Avoid Using Purple Prose when Writing/wikiHow

The first example portrays the traditional SVO structure of the sentence where Imran Khan functions as a subject, 'decides' is a verb, and the rest of the part of the sentence completes the entire meaning of the sentence. Similarly, example 3 shows that America functions as a subject, whereas, the word 'is' holds its position as a helping verb and two more prepositional phrases complete the sentence. However, examples 2 and 4 are different in structure to examples 1 and 3. Both these sentences of examples (2 and 4) start with an abstract noun 'decision' and adjective phrase, 'peace talks' which have been nominalized. These sentences create ambiguity and the readers face difficulty in understanding the intended message of the writer. So, the expert writers advise avoiding nominalization for better understanding and clarity of the message in every kind of communication, which may be ensured with the simplicity of the sentence.

4.1.7 Avoiding Wordiness, Choppy Sentences, Noun Clusters, Redundant Phrases

Effective communication needs concise, clear, and complete sentences. In this respect, wordiness is disliked in a message which brings inconvenience on the part of the writer. Some writers feel proud of loading their messages with irrelevant

information. The same used to happen with us in our previous classes when some teachers advised us to blacken the papers because according to these teachers, the volume of a paper works more than paying attention to the quality of writing with less volume. But it is illogical nowadays because every person is very busy; he does not have time to read unnecessary details of the message, so the writers should avoid wordiness to make their statements easy to understand for readers. The second important thing to avoid by a technical writer (for a technical writer. OR to be avoided by) to use choppy sentences in his writing. Choppy sentences are uneven sentences which are consisted of various clauses but lack syntactic uniformity. It means that one phrase or clause of the same sentence starts with a noun, the other with an adjective, and still another with a preposition. Therefore, good writing skills demand that every phrase or a clause of a longer sentence should observe the rule of parallelism as mentioned above under the heading 'employment of parallelism'. In the same way, it is always advised to avoid noun clusters which create ambiguity and make the expression vague and dull. Redundant phrases are also used by some writers which at one side show their inexpert written expression and on the other side; it creates unclarity (ambiguity) in the message. So useless phrases should not be included in the message whether it is an oral message or written message. Effective and successful communication requires some specific rules to follow which have been designed after the hard work of years, so these rules and principles of writing are very precious and beneficial to follow.

4.1.8 Avoid Sexist Language

Sexist language is a language that unnecessarily identifies gender. It can take several forms:

a) A pronoun that denotes single-sex when the information being conveyed pertains equally to either or both sexes.
   Ex. Every student should have his notebook with him in class.
   (Only appropriate at an all-male school)

b) A job title that links the job to single-sex when either sex can perform the job;
   Ex. fireman, mailman, policeman

c) A single-sex pronoun in conjunction with a neutral job title, so that the implication is that the job "belongs" to a single-sex;
   Ex. The nurse awoke her patient at five a.m.

d) Any other use of language that unnecessarily and arbitrarily makes gender distinctions;
   Ex. Early man used a system of gestures to communicate.

When using pronouns, you have several choices. Pick the one that seems most natural in context: Change singular nouns to plurals and use a gender-neutral pronoun, or try to avoid the pronoun entirely:
Instead of: Each student must have his notebook with him in class.
Use: All students must have notebooks with them in class.

- If you think you must use a singular adjective like "each" or "every," try to avoid using a pronoun:
  Instead of: Each student must hand in his homework on Thursday.
  Use: Each student must hand in the assigned homework on Thursday.

- When using a job title, try to eliminate the pronoun:
  Instead of: A truck driver should plan his route carefully.
  Use: A truck driver should plan the travel route carefully.

- When eliminating the pronoun seems unavoidable, use both male and female pronouns:
  Instead of: A student should meet with his advisor.
  Use: A student should meet with his or her advisor.

- Choose a single-sex pronoun and use it consistently throughout the paper — but be especially careful not to do this in a way that will perpetuate stereotypes. For example, it might be unwise to use "he" and "him" when talking about professions stereotypically associated with males; e.g., engineering.

  Although it may often seem that avoiding sexist language can lead one into using awkward or grating constructions, it is also possible to use gender-neutral language gracefully and unobtrusively.

e) Using Titles:
Instead of sex-linked titles, try neutral titles:
Fireman – fireperson is awkward, but firefighter is not,
Policeman – policeperson sounds silly, but police officer sounds natural,
Mailman – mailperson seems awkward, a postal worker does not,
Cleaning woman – house cleaner, office cleaner, custodian are all preferable and
Poetess – poet can be either a woman or a man and does not sound as if a woman a poet is so odd that she needs a special appellation.

4.1.9 Avoid Garden Path Sentences

Writing is essentially about communicating something to another person, and if the sentence is not formed well, or if it is poorly constructed, the other person will have trouble discerning what your idea is, and this undermines your purpose in writing. In psycholinguistics, a *garden-path sentence* is a sentence that is temporarily ambiguous or confusing because it contains a word group that appears to be

compatible with more than one structural analysis. A *garden path sentence* is a sentence with an ambiguous part that leads the reader to initially assume a certain interpretation for the sentence until they reach a point where the ambiguity is resolved and this initial interpretation is shown to be wrong.

Essentially, when you read a garden path sentence, you encounter an ambiguous part that has multiple possible interpretations, one of which is significantly more likely to be true than the others, which causes you to select that interpretation for the information that you have read so far. However, as you continue reading, you suddenly realize that this initial interpretation isn't valid since it would cause the sentence to be ambiguous. This forces you to re-process the sentence, in order to identify its correct interpretation.

"The horse raced past the barn fell" is an example of a garden path sentence, whose (whose is used just for human beings or for animals; so instead which can be used here like meaning of which) meaning can be more clearly described when phrased as "the horse *which was* raced past the barn fell" (The correct sentence is "The horse, which raced past the barn, fell down").

This sentence is a garden path sentence because, when a reader begins reading it, they generally start by assuming that "raced" is an active verb. However, once the reader reaches the word "fell", they realize that "raced" cannot be active, otherwise the sentence would be ungrammatical (since the verb "fell" wouldn't have a subject). The reader then has to reprocess the sentence, before they are able to identify the correct interpretation for it, where the verb "raced" is passive.

People sometimes use garden path sentences in their writing without being aware that they're doing so, which can lead to issues for readers.

Examples:

	Garden path Sentences	**Meanings**
a.	The florist sent the flowers was pleased	The florist who was sent the flowers was pleased
b.	When John called his old mother was happy",	When John called, his old mother was happy
c.	Because he always jogs a mile seems a short distance to him.	Because he always jogs, a mile seems like a short distance to him.
d.	The government plans to raise taxes were defeated.	The government had plans to raise taxes, which were defeated
e.	While I was surfing the internet went down.	While I was surfing, the internet went down

4.2 CLARITY OF PARAGRAPHS FOR READERS

Sentences gather to make a paragraph. Each paragraph consists of many sentences varying from having 5 to 15 and 20 of them. But the reasonable length of a good paragraph is between 6 and 9 lines. Clarity comes with clear thinking and thinking becomes clear with the collection and organization of data in a proper way. There are some paragraphs of a long report, or proposal or project or even letter which has a number of problems. The gravest problem is a paragraph's incoherence. A lot of information is loaded in the paragraph which is not necessary and relevant for that paragraph. One other negligence most of the writers do is that they write a paragraph at different intervals of time. It breaks the natural flow of the sentences of a paragraph and makes the paragraph boring and unacademic. Secondly, some writers write a paragraph in one go but they do not review it or get it proofread by someone else. It takes time to delete some superfluous information, add some useful information, avoid some syntactic structures, and include some syntactic structures on a priority basis. Therefore, if the writers follow these guidelines, their paragraphs will be very clear, otherwise, their unclarity will create embarrassment for the readers.

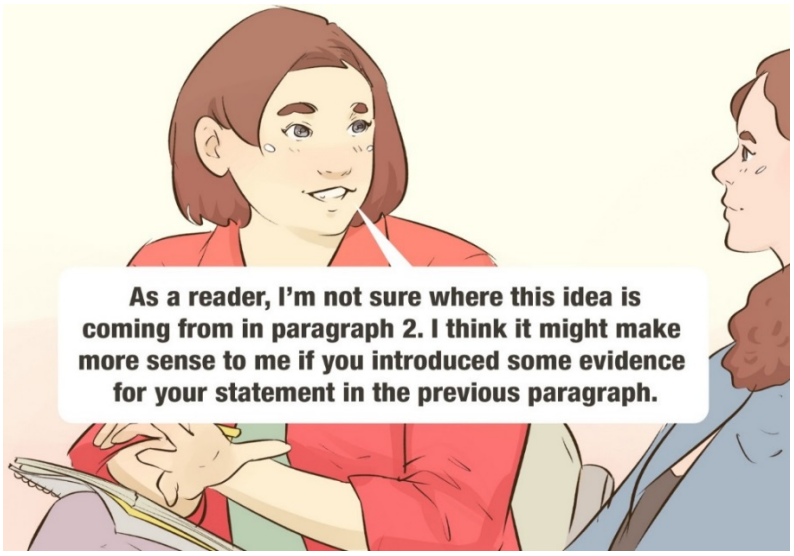
As a reader, I'm not sure where this idea is coming from in paragraph 2. I think it might make more sense to me if you introduced some evidence for your statement in the previous paragraph.

Figure 4.2: 6 Ways to Evaluate Writing Skills/wikiHow

4.2.1 Putting Topic Sentence First

In paragraph writing, a technical writer has to follow certain writing principles out of which one is that he has to write the first sentence as a topic sentence. This topic sentence will provide a clear direction to the reader and to grasp further information will be easy for him. Sometimes, a buffer or neutral statement is required in some

cases. So the writer can use a neutral sentence in the beginning but it should have such stuff which can guide the reader towards a certain direction which is the major theme of the topic. In the other words, the very first sentence of a paragraph is a topic sentence because it introduces the topic. If the first sentence does not have something related to or as an introduction to the topic, it is not liked by the experts and the reader will have to encounter hard with the information provided to get clarity of the topic. Thus, when one relevant sentence, in the beginning, can serve the purpose, so why the technical writers will not abide by this rule for effective writing to convey the message successfully by helping the reader, obviously, they will do it.

4.2.2 Coherence in Paragraph Structure

The title of this heading has a very close association with some of the above-mentioned titles related to paragraph writing. It is a matter of fact that coherence in a paragraph is inevitable because it gives beauty and clarity to the writing. Humdrum and incoherent sentences selected for a paragraph are like an army of different languages and different cultural backgrounds who have no uniformity and likeness. Such type of multi-colored army cannot be considered as one whole unit of an organized system. In this respect, the technical writer attempts to create a natural connection between the sentences based on the importance of ideas from top to bottom. When the intended reader reads a message, which is coherent and has a flow of information in a natural manner, it satisfies the reader and makes communication successful.

4.3 GLOBALIZATION AND STYLE

Figure 4.3: M.S.in Professional and Technical Communication/Humanities

4.3.1 Choice of Tone for Reader

The tone of a message has the basic importance as in non-verbal communication; a sarcastic smile may have a very serious reaction of the audience who without speaking any single word has changed the behavior of the people. It is said that unspoken words and gestures are very strong in expression than words themselves. In messages with negative responses or negative encoding especially need a very positive tone for the reader. A general principle to select an appropriate tone is to behave always with a positive tone whether you are in anger or pleasure. Sometimes, serious tones are required in some cases particularly, when the audience does not bother the requests of the speaker or writer and the image of the writer is at risk, otherwise, in all of the other situations, the positive tone is appreciated.

4.4 ETHICS AND STYLE

Ethics in every field are seriously required and observed to avoid negativity and violation of the rights of the others. In this concern, the writer should be polite, honest in providing information, and fair in dealing with the audience. Keeping in view a variety of writing genres, requirements vary from one form to another. For example, magazine requires a different type of information which may be copied from the other magazines. It is ethics that stop a writer from doing so. In the same way, in writing an annual report or any other report, the writer needs to put only that information which he/she has obtained from the field instead of providing that information that goes to his/her favor and hiding the actual information. So at every step, ethical values are required and the writer should be objective before the start of any kind of writing. Moreover, every genre, demands a different and unique style of writing. Therefore, whatever style is followed by the other international standard firms, can be chosen; the one which is unanimously accepted by the concerned members of the organization. Clarity is the gold standard for all communications. Jargon, shop talk, or techno-babble that marginalizes or excludes the reader or audience is not only confusing, but it is also unethical. It is both reasonable and desirable to create prose, be it technical or otherwise, that is written for its intended audience. Unfortunately, sometimes it is all too easy to slide into a vernacular that is common among those in-house. To use terms that are unique to a particular discursive community can create a boundary between the document and its intended audience. If you must use jargonistic terms, include a glossary, or define the term the first time you use it in the text. If your language can be misconstrued, it can cause problems. A good general rule is to guard against any use of terms that are common in-house when the audience for the document is "out of the house." This is not only good practice, but it is also the ethical thing to do.

- Use the active voice.

- Use the subject-verb-object structure.
- Do not use "weasel words" (possibly, maybe, perhaps)
- Use imperatives.
- Clearly indicate that you are the responsible agent.

> I have decided to implement your suggestion that we supply all the office workers with laptops and eliminate their towers. This suggestion is excellent. You have clearly made the case that this change will reduce eye strain issues and will greatly enhance the flow of information in that department. Make" an appointment with me so we can start to implement this fine idea.

The passive tone implies that the reader has more power than the writer or that the situation is negative. It is appropriate when the writer addresses a superior or when the writer's goal is to neutralize a potentially negative reaction. To make the tone passive:

- Avoid imperatives.
- Use the passive voice.
- Use "weasel words.
- Use longer sentences.
- Do not explicitly take responsibility.

> The proposal to implement laptops in our department has not been accepted. The ergonomic benefits of the screens are not seen as offsetting the potential disruption that will be caused by the migration of files to the new machines. The large footprint of the docking station has also been suggested as a possible problem for our employees due to their already restricted desk spaces, because of the need for action on computer replacement is necessary, a meeting will be scheduled the next week to discuss this.

Compare this to a forceful presentation:

> The steering 'committee and I reject the laptop proposal. You have not included enough convincing data morale or workflow and you have not dealt with workflow disruption and the large size of the dickering station. Make an appointment to see me if necessary.

The personal tone implies that the reader and writer are equal. It is appropriate to use when you want to express respect for the reader. To make a style personal:

- Use the active voice.
- Use first names.
- Use personal pronouns.
- Use short sentences.
- Use contractions.
- Direct questions at the reader.

Ted, thanks for that laptop suggestion. The steering committee loved it. Like you 'We feel it will solve the eyestrain issue and will facilitate data flow: And we think it will also raise morale. I'd like you to begin work on this soon. Can you make an appointment to see me this week?

This tone is also appropriate for delivering a negative message when both parties are equal.

Ted thanks for the laptop suggestion, but we can't do it this cycle. The steering committee understands the ergonomic issue you raise, but (they are very concerned about the disruption that migrating all those files will cause, In addition, they feel that we need to work out the entire issue of footprint the model you suggested would cause a number of problems with current desk configuration0 know that this is a disappointment. Could we get together soon to discuss this?

The impersonal tone implies that the writer is not important or that the situation is neutral. Use this tone when you want to downplay personalities in the situation. To make the tone impersonal:

- Do not use names, especially first names.
- Do not use personal pronouns.
- Use the passive voice.
- Use longer sentences.

A decision to provide each employee with a laptop has been made. Laptops will reduce the eye fatigue that some employees have experienced and the laptops will increase data flow. Ted Baxter will chair the implementation committee. Donna Silver and Robert Sirabian will assist. The committee will hold Its initial meeting on Monday, October 10, at 3; 00 P.M. in Room 1.

Figure 4.4: Traditional diversity training doesn't work. Why not? And what…/Diversity Jobs

4.5 WORKSHEET FOR STYLE

- Find sentences that contain passive voice. Change passive into active.
- Look for sentences shorter than 12 or longer than 25 words. Either combine them or break them up.
- Check each sentence for coordinating elements. If they are not parallel, make them so.
- Find the "garden path" sentences and revise them.
- Read carefully for instances of the following potential problems:
  - Nominalizations
  - Sexist language
  - Too frequent use of there are
  - Choppiness
  - Incorrect use of you
  - Wordiness

- Sentences.

  Look for four types of phrasing. Change the phrasing as suggested here or as determined by the needs of your audience and the situation.

  - The word this. Usually, you can eliminate it (and slightly change the sentence that is left), or else you should add a noun directly behind it. ("By increasing the revenue, this will cause more profit" becomes "Increasing the revenue will cause more profit.")

  - The words am, is, are, was, were, be, and been. If these are followed by a past participle (past participle is used for third form of verb) tense (was written) the sentence is passive. Try to change the verb to an active sense (wrote).

  - Lists of things or series of activities. Put all such items, whether of nouns, adjectives, or verb forms, in the same grammatical form (to purchase, to assemble, and to erect—not to purchase, assembling, and to erect). This strategy will do more to clarify your writing than following any other style tip.

  - The phrases there are and there is. You can almost always eliminate these phrases and that which appears later in the sentence. ("There are four benefits that you will find" becomes "You will find four benefits.")

Exercises

Q. 1 Analyse example 1. Either in groups or individually; revise the document using the concepts outlined in this chapter Unit). You may revise both wording and tone.

Example-1: Methods Statements

In this section of the report, I will discuss www.flipdog.com. I used the job search titles of Retail Analyst, Construction Project Manager, and Packaging Engineer. For each of these job search titles, I researched the entire United States, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

When I first got to the website, I clicked on "Find Jobs." My first step was to then choose the area I wanted to search for. I decided to start with the entire United States so I just left "Search: All of U.S." as the default search. With this option, there was a maximum of 264,941 jobs searched. I then had the choice to choose a category of search. You may search all job

categories, for a category individually, or by "Ctrl-click" to search multiple categories.

I also had the choice of choosing a specific company for employment. Like the category search above, you have the choice to search all employers, multiple employers, or a single employer.

For this research project, I didn't use the job category search or the employer search. I skipped right to the keyword search and typed in "retail analyst."

I then clicked "Get Results." Within all of the United States, "retail analyst" received 179 results. After these results were listed, you are also given the option to search for specifics within results by entering keywords into this figure below. (For my research, I used total results only.)

You may also modify the dates. (For my research, I used all dates by default.)

I continued my research using the steps above. The tables below summarize my results. Each table demonstrates the area searched (all of the United States, Wisconsin, and Minnesota), as well as the three job titles Retail Analyst, Construction Project Engineer, and Packaging Engineer. Note: For results over 200, Flip Dog reported as 200.

Q. 2 Review the following paper for tone. By indicating specific phrases and words, determine whether the author has adopted the correct tone. If your instructor requires it, rewrite the report with a different tone.

HOW TO CHANGE THE BACKGROUND COLOR IN PHOTOSHOP?

Introduction:
Photoshop was always something that scared me a little when mentioned, but after exploring it a lot a couple of hours I got the hang of it. I am working with Photoshop with other people in my class and they are doing examples of other projects to do in Photoshop also. (I have links to their sites below.) My topic is how to change the background color and it was very simple to do.

Method:
The first thing that 'explored with ended up being the right thing so I got a little lucky when doing this, but a little knowledge of Auto Cad 14 helped too. I Clicked on the magic wand, which looks just like it sounds, and then clicked onto the color in the background that I wanted to change. This produces a blinking outline around everything that touches that color in the picture.

I then knew that I needed to be able to select a new color so I clicked on "Window" and scrolled down to "Show color." This brought up a new smaller window that had a palette full of colors. It asked me to select a color and I chose red. After clicking "Okay "absolutely nothing happened and this had me stumped for a while. Here is where my Auto Cad experience helped me out. I went to "Edit", and scroll down to "Fill" which basically regenerates your picture the same as in Auto Cad. My background is now red.

Result:
Finally, I was able to change the background color to red. In the corners, the grey background is still there because that is a slightly different shade and all I would have to do is go through the process again' and click on the color and make sure I had the same shade of red. Another thing to notice is that when you look through the bottles near the top you can see a white background yet, which I could also click on and give a pinkish color.

Discussion:
This option in Photoshop can allow you to do virtually whatever you can come up within your head. I believe that I am going to take some photos of vacations where the sky is really dark and make it a little brighter day. (You won't remember the difference in thirty years anyway) This feature could also help if you need to eliminate something in the background completely like an indecent sign or person. If you have any needs similar to this then this should be something that you look into.

Q. 3 Analyze Example 9.3 on p. 225 to determine the sentence strategies and tone used for the intended audience.

Q. 4 Compare strategies in Examples 9.3 and 4.1. Write a brief memo in which you give examples that illustrate how sentence tone creates a definition of an

intended audience. Alternative: In groups of three or four, compare Examples 9.3(Not highlighted by me)

Q. 5 Rewrite example 1 for a different audience. Read your new memo to the class, who will identify the audience and strategies you used.

Q. 6 Rewrite two paragraphs of Examples 9.1 (p.223) or 10.4 (pp. 249-250) in order, to relate to a different audience. Keep the content the same, but change the sentence strategies and the tone.

Q. 7 Rewrite part or all of Example 9.3 to apply to a different audience.

Q. 8 Revise the following two paragraphs so that the sentences focus on the Simulation.

Modelling Engineer as the actor in the process of model building.

Paragraph 1

The process of abstraction of the system into mathematical-logical relationships with the problem formulation is the Model Building Phase. The assumptions and decision variables are used to mathematically determine the system responses. Also, the desired performance measures and design alternatives are evaluated. The system being modelled is broken down into events. For each event, relevant activities are identified. The basic model of the system is now an abstraction of the "real" system.

Paragraph 2

The Data Acquisition Phase involves the identification and collection of data. This phase is often the most time consuming and critical. If the data collected are not valid, the simulation will produce results that are not valid. The data to be acquired are determined by the decision variables and assumptions. All organizations collect large quantities of data for the day-to-day management and for accounting purposes. To collect data for simulation, the SMEs need the cooperation of management in order to gain knowledge and access to the information sources. When the existing data sources are inadequate, a special data-collection exercise is required or the data are estimated.

4.6 FOCUS ON, BIAS IN LANGUAGE

Bias in Language Current theory has made clear just how many languages and language labels affect our feelings. Biased language always turns into biased attitudes and actions that perpetuate demeaning attitudes and assumptions. It is not hard to write in an unbiased way if you apply a few basic rules. The American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual suggests • that the most basic rule focuses on exclusion. A sentence that makes some-one feel excluded from a group needs to be revised. It's rather like hearing yourself discussed while you are in the room. That feeling is often uncomfortable, and you should not write sentences that give that feeling to the others.

4.6.1 Describe People at the Appropriate Level of Specificity

This guideline helps whenever you have to describe people. Technical writing has always encouraged a precise description of technical objects. You should apply the same principle to the people who use and are affected by those objects. So, when referring to a group of humans of both sexes, say "men and women," not just "men."

4.6.2 Be Sensitive to Labels

Call people what they want to be called. However, be aware that these preferences change over time. In the 1960s, one segment of the American population preferred to be called "black"; in the 1990s, that preference changed to "African American." Basically, do not write about people as if they were objects—"the complainers," "the. strikers." Try instead to put the person first— “people, who complain," "people who are striking." Because this can get cumbersome, you can begin by using a precise description and after that use a shortened form as long as it is not offensive. The issue of what is offensive is a difficult question. How do you know; that "elderly" is offensive but "older" is not? There is no easy answer. Ask members of that group. Listen to the words that national TV news applies to members of the group.

4.6.3 Acknowledge Participation

This guideline asks you to treat people, as action initiators, not as the recipients of the action. In particular, it suggests using the active voice to talk about people who are involved in large mass activities. So say, "The secretaries completed the survey," not "The secretaries were given the survey."

4.6.4 Avoid Ambiguity in Sex identity or Sex Role

This guideline deals with the widespread use of masculine words, especially he, when referring to all of the people, this usage has been changing for some time but

still causes much discussion and controversy. The basic rule is to be specific. If the referent of the word is male, use he; if female, use she; if generic, use he or she or, more informally, they.

4.6.5 Use the Preferred Designations of Racial Groups

The preferred designations change arid sometimes' are not agreed upon even by members of the designated group. -Be sensitive to the wishes of the group you are serving. At times, Hispanic are not a good choice because individuals might prefer Latino or Latina, Chicano, or Chicana or even a word relates to a specific country, like Mexican. Similar issues arise when you discuss Americans of African, Asian, and Arabic heritage. If you don't know, ask.

4.6.6 Do not Use Language that Equates a Person with His or Her Condition

“Disability" refers to an attribute of a person. Say, "person with diabetes" to focus in a neutral way on 'the attribute; do not say, "diabetic," which equates the person with the condition.

4.6.7 Choose Specific Age Designations

Use the boy and girl for people up to 18; use man and woman for people over 18. Prefer older to the elderly.

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Unit–5

RESEARCHING

8 Advanced Tools for Researching….. /Eventbrite

Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

Reviewer: Ms Farah Saeed

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INTRODUCTION

You have already gone through the four units, which exclusively dealt with all the basic and very important components, factors and requirements of technical communication. While considering the importance of research and its writing, especially for the students of advanced level, this unit is included in this book on basics of technical writing. The reason behind is that writing a research work is also included in technical written communication and it is crucial to learn it as well. Therefore, this unit is focusing on all the necessary details for writing a research work, ranging from developing a research proposal to the inclusion of references at the end of work. It is explaining all the stages and concepts behind the research process. They include exploration of the relationship between information, knowledge, data, decision-making and the role of research. For this purpose, it is explained how a research strategy is developed in line with the ethics in research as well as how research ideas are formulated into researchable problems, writing research questions, hypotheses and research objectives. Afterwards unit 5 further explains all the writing conventions related with the review of literature, research methodology, data analysis, conclusion, recommendations, references or bibliography and appendices. All these sections are described with all of the essential information needed to develop the skill of research writing. For example, tools required for conducting a research, especially survey, like open and closed ended questionnaires and interviews are mentioned in this unit. To be brief, this unit is a comprehensive description of all what is needed for conducting and writing a research work.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define and explain the term ‘researching’;
2. Define what we mean by ‘research’ and describe the stages and concepts behind the research process
3. Explore how data, information, knowledge, and decision-making relate to the role of research
4. Explain how research ideas are formulated into researchable problems
5. Provide guidance on formulating and writing research questions or hypotheses and research objectives
6. Elucidate the process of developing a research strategy; and
7. Understand the ethics in research.

5.1 THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The purpose of the research is to find out about a particular subject that has significance for you: Your subject can be broad and general, such as recycling plastics, or narrow and specific, such as purchasing a new photocopier for your office. The significance is the importance of the subject to you or your community. Will the new method of recycling plastics make a profit for the company? Will that new photocopier make the office run more smoothly? Generally, the goal of the research is to solve or eliminate a problem (Why does the photocopier break down?) or to answer a question (What differences are there in photocopier technologies?). You can use two strategies: talking to people and searching through printed information. To find out about the photo-copier, for instance, you would talk to various users to discover features that they need, and you could read sales material that explained those features and reviews that evaluated performance. Research is an activity that is liable for innovation, newness, and discovery of untouched facts and realities. There is no such reality that is legitimate or fixed one, there are certain aspects of reality or truth. The concerned people look into the facts and truths already revealed and try to pick the related neighbouring area which needs to be investigated. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to create a gap to find out a new unexplored research dimension. Research is not only limited to investigate unexplored areas but to make the explored truth the part of the already available repository of knowledge. This repository of knowledge becomes a contributor to the community because no research is beneficial which has no contribution to society. Only working and reworking on researchable issues is a wastage of time and that of expense, if research findings cannot be applied anywhere in society. Thus, research is a very effective tool to address the unaddressed issues and to probe into very much debated issues as well. Research gives a solution to the problems which may be social, cultural, political, religious, or educational. Without research, the debates on issues may be mere chit chat; it will not be useful or applicable in the problem area.

5.2 QUESTIONING -THE BASIC SKILL OF RESEARCHING

Questioning is, obviously, the basic skill of researching which is based on research objectives. The researchers first formulate research objectives which their topic or issue guides them to. Without writing the objectives one cannot make the study focused one to achieve better results. Research questions have a direct and indirect link with research objectives, as mentioned earlier, with topic or issue; and based on questions, theoretical and analytical models and methods are chosen. So, it is

inevitable for a researcher to learn this basic skill and apply it in his/ her research study.

Figure 5.1: Formulating a research question…Three criteria for a…/Philpot Education

5.2.1 How to Discover Questions

Question discovery is an art that comes with more reading, more practicing, and more knowing. Questions have a direct link to the research topic. The research topic guides the researcher to develop research questions that can provide satisfactory answers. Moreover, research questions are based on research objectives. So, the researchers should discover research objectives first and then formulate research questions. Research questions are the supposed or proposed statements constituted with the help of questioning words. When the aims and objectives are clear in the mind of the researcher, questions are discovered very easily. To learn about any topic—such as which photocopier to buy (be bought) for the office—ask questions. Formulate questions that will help you investigate the situation effectively and that will provide a basis for a report. For instance, the question "In what ways does our staff use the photocopier?" will not only produce important data but will also be the basis for a section on "usage patterns" in a report. Several strategies for discovering helpful questions are to ask basic questions, ask questions about significance, consult the right sources, and interact flexibly.

(i) Ask Basic Questions

Basic questions lead you to the essential information about your topic. They include:

- What are the appropriate terms and their definitions?
- What mechanisms are involved?
- What materials are involved?
- What processes are involved?

(ii) Ask Questions about Significance

Questions about significance help you "get the big picture" and grasp the context of your topic. They include:

- Who needs it and why?
- How is it related to the other items?
- How is it related to the current systems?
- What is its end goal?
- How do parts and processes contribute to the end goal?
- What controversies exist?
- What alternatives exist?
- What are the implications of those alternatives?
- What costs are involved?

(iii) Consult the Right Sources

The right sources are the people or the printed information that has the facts you need. People who are involved in the situation can answer your basic questions as well as your questions about significance. They can give you the basic facts and identify their needs. The basic facts about photocopying machines can come from engineers, experienced users, or salespeople. Information about needs comes from people who use the product. They expect a photocopier to perform certain functions, and they know the conditions that make performing those functions possible. Printed information also answers the basic questions and questions of significance, often more thoroughly than people can. It can be hard copy (words printed on paper) and on-line copy (words available electronically). Printed information includes everything from sales brochures to encyclopaedias to bulletin board discussions. For the photocopier, sales literature would give you prices, features, and specifications; review articles would evaluate performance, and bulletin boards could give you user testimony.

(iv) Interact Flexibly

To ask questions productively, be flexible. People have the information you need, and you must elicit as much of it as you can. Sometimes questions produce

a useful answer, sometimes not. If you ask, "Which feature of the photo-copier is most important to you?"; the respondent might say, "Its speed," which is a broad answer. To narrow the answer, try an "echo technique" question, in which you repeat the key term of the answer: "Speed?" On the other hand, if you ask, "Is the ability to collate pages important to you?", the respondent might say, "No, I seldom use that, but I often copy on both sides of a sheet of paper". That answer opens two lines of questioning for you. Why is collating not important? Why is back-to-back copying important? How frequently do you do it? For what type of job? You can also use questions to decide what material to read. If your question is "How does this model compare to others?";(Better question could be "How can this model be compared to the others?) an article that would interest you is "A Comparison of Photocopiers." Carefully formulating your questions, makes your reading more efficient. Read actively, searching for particular facts that answer your questions (Spivey and King Year?). While reading, take notes, constantly reviewing the answers and information you have obtained. You will find patterns in the material or gaps in your knowledge. If three articles present similar evaluations of the photocopiers, you have a pattern on which to base a decision.

5.3 COLLECTING INFORMATION FROM PEOPLE

People are the major source of providing information to the researcher about a relevant topic of social sciences because social research is not laboratory research based on experiments, it is related to people in the society. At the same time, it is a very difficult activity to gather accurate and valid information from the people. In certain circumstances, it becomes more difficult to even collect information because people do not cooperate with researchers to provide the information. As every type of social research is based on social data through which results and findings can be derived by the application of certain required tools of data analysis. It has been observed that if the people are distributed with a questionnaire, they do not fulfil it with sincere efforts rather they fill up the questionnaire forms without proper reading. In this way, the results obtained are often questionable. Moreover, in the case of interviewing, it is very difficult for the researchers to get the time from the people. In applied research, if the researcher is using observation as the tool of data collection, he/ she is not allowed to sit in the class to observe the participation of the students in the teaching-learning process or to observe the teaching methodologies used in our educational institutions.

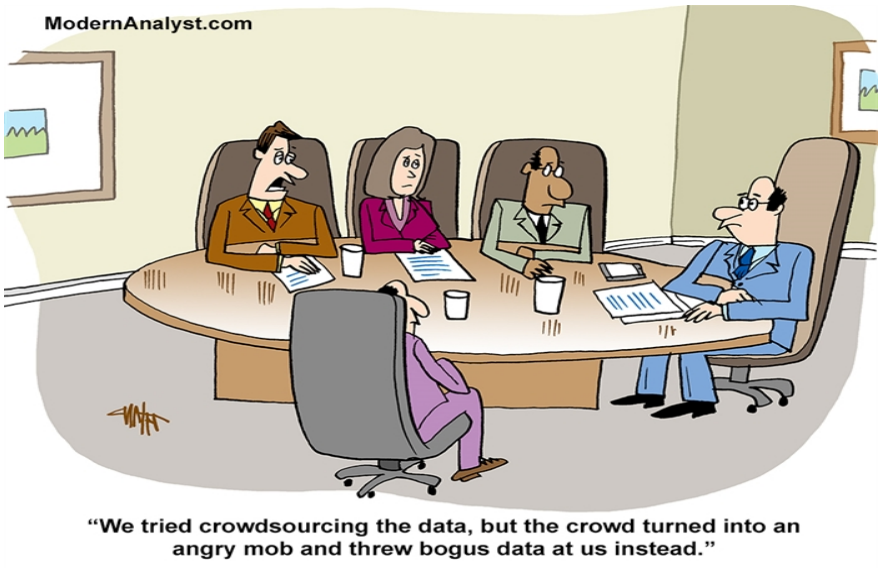
ModernAnalyst.com
"We tried crowdsourcing the data, but the crowd turned into an angry mob and threw bogus data at us instead."

Figure 5.2: Humour: Crowdsourcing Data Gathering and Analysis/Modern Analyst

5.3.1 Interviewing

Interviewing is a process through which relevant information is gathered. It is used as a tool for data collection which is considered reliable in some cases. However, it is avoided to be used as a tool to collect the data because it demands qualitative methods of analysing the data which is much longer. If the problems and challenges are faced, it becomes a more authentic tool of data collection. It needs careful attention of the researcher and demands certain important things to do, for example:

- The researcher has to design interview questions for the respondents (concerned people who are supposed to provide the information).
- He/She has to get the formal permission of the respondent.
- He/She has to decide about the time of the interview with the respondent.
- He/ She has to negotiate with the respondent about the place of the interview which may be the respondent's office, the office of the researcher, or any other neutral place like a hotel or a cafe, etc.

(i) Types of Interviewing

There are three types of interviewing:

- Structured interviewing
- Un-structured interviewing
- Semi-Structured interviewing

(a) Structured Interviewing

In this type of interview, the researcher shares all the information with the respondent. The researcher plans to organize and formulates all the questions required to obtain the desired information. He also provides these questions to the respondent so that the respondent should go through the questionnaire and be able to provide the required information. The respondent goes through the questionnaire well before time and can fulfil the requirement of the researcher.

(b) Advantages of Structured Interviews

Following are the advantages of the Structured Interviews:

- Structured interviews focus on the accuracy of different responses due to which extremely organized data can be collected. Different respondents have a different type of answers to the same structure of questions – answers obtained can be collectively analyzed.
- They can be used to get in touch with a large sample of the target population.
- The interview procedure is made easy due to the standardization offered by the structured interviews.
- Replication across multiple samples becomes easy due to the same structure of the interview.
- As the scope of detail is already considered while designing the interview, better information can be obtained and the researcher can analyze the research problem comprehensively by asking accurate research questions.
- Since the structure of the interview is fixed, it often generates reliable results and is quick to execute.
- The relationship between the researcher and the respondent is not formal due to which the researcher can clearly understand the margin of error in case the respondent either degrees to be a part of the surveyor is just not interested in providing the right information.

(c) Disadvantages of Structured Interviews

Following are the disadvantages of the Structured Interviews:

- The limited scope of assessment of the obtained results.
- The accuracy of information overpowers the detail of information.
- Respondents are forced to select from the provided answer options.
- The researcher is expected to always adhere to the list of decided questions irrespective of how interesting the conversation is turning out to be with the participants.
- A significant amount of time is required for a structured interview.

(ii) Un-Structured Interviewing

Unstructured interviewing is also used as a tool to collect the desired data from the respondent, but such type of interview is not fully planned and organized as compared to the structured interviewing. The respondent may be earlier informed about interviewing and his consent may be sought, though the questions are not pre-planned and pre-organized. The researcher may clear his thinking about what he would have to ask according to the requirement of his study. Therefore, this type of interviewing is unstructured as its name signifies that it is not well structured, rather it is extemporaneous with a lit bit preparation. These interviews are possible where the respondent is easily available or very close to the researcher and the researcher has an informal and friendly relationship with him.

(a) Advantages of Unstructured Interviews

Following are the advantages of the Unstructured Interviews:

- Owing to the informal nature of unstructured interviews – it becomes extremely easy for researchers to try and develop a friendly rapport with the participants. This leads to gaining insights in extreme detail without much conscious effort.
- The participants can clarify all their doubts about the questions and the researcher can take each opportunity to explain his/her intention for better answers.
- There are no questions which the researcher has to abide by and this usually increases the flexibility of the entire research process.

(b) Disadvantages of Unstructured Interviews

Following are the disadvantages of the Unstructured Interviews:

- As there is no structure to the interview process, researchers take time to execute these interviews.
- The absence of a standardized set of questions and guidelines indicates that the reliability of unstructured interviews is questionable.
- In many cases, the ethics involved in these interviews are considered borderline upsetting.

(iii) Semi-Structured Interviewing

This type of interviewing stands in between structured interviewing and unstructured interviewing. On one hand, it fulfils the demands of the structured interviewing and on the other hand, it fulfils the demands of the unstructured interviewing. In it, the respondents are pre-informed about the topic of discussion and they are also provided with the questions of the interview. Time and the easily accessible place are also negotiated between both the parties before interviewing.

However, the most striking thing of this type of interviewing is that here is the possibility for the researcher to ask any such question which is not already present in the list of questions but is necessary and has got the attention of the researcher during the interview because these questions may be helpful in the current study.

(a) Advantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

The advantages of the Semi-Structured Interviews are as following:

- Questions of semi-structured interviews are prepared before the scheduled interview which provides the researcher with time to prepare and analyze the questions.
- It is flexible to an extent while maintaining the research guidelines.
- Researchers can express the interview questions in the format they prefer, unlike the structured interview.
- Reliable qualitative data can be collected via these interviews.

(b) Disadvantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

- Participants may question the reliability factor of these interviews due to the flexibility offered.
- Comparing two different answers becomes difficult as the guideline for conducting interviews is not entirely followed.
- No two questions will have the same structure and the result will be an inability to compare or infer results.

5.3.2 Surveying

Surveying is another technique of data collection which has its pros and cons too. It is different from interviewing in the sense that in interviewing, the questions are planned, prepared, organized, and distributed to the interviewee except in the case of the unstructured interviews. However, in the case of surveying, the researcher has to reach the place without informing and without properly selecting the target audience as the interviewees. The respondents do not know about the topic, they do not know about the questions possible be asked by an interviewer. They have to answer every question based on their knowledge or observation. This type of data is mostly recorded by the researcher which can be transcribed and then used for analysis.

The essence of the survey method can be explained as "questioning individuals on a topic or topics and then describing their responses". In business studies survey method of primary data collection is used to test concepts, reflect an attitude of people, establish the level of customer satisfaction, conduct segmentation research,

and a set of the other purposes. The survey method can be used in both quantitative as well as qualitative studies.

Figure 5.3: UCSUR (@Pittcsur)-Survey Research, Data Collection Methodology/ ucsur@pitt.edu

(i) Two Main Purposes of Survey Method

Following are two main purposes of the survey method:

- Describing certain aspects or characteristics of a population and/or
- Testing hypotheses about the nature of relationships within a population.

The survey method can be broadly divided into three categories: mail survey, telephone survey, and personal interview. The descriptions of each of these methods are briefly explained in the following table:

Survey Method	Description
Mail survey	A written survey that is self-administered.
Telephone survey	A survey conducted through telephone in which the questions are read to the respondents.
Personal interview	A face-to-face interview of the respondent.

(ii) Major Survey Methods and their Descriptions

Alternatively, from the viewpoint of practicality, the most popular variations of surveys include questionnaires, interviews, and documentation review. The main advantages and disadvantages associated with these primary data collection methods are explained by Denscombe (2010) as following:

Method	Purpose	Advantages	Disadvantages
Questionnaires	Conducted to gather large size information in a short period of time	Members of the sample group can remain anonymous. Considerably cheaper than most of the other primary data collection methods. Possibility of generating a large amount of data.	Difficulties of ensuring greater depth for the research The problem of the 'first choice selection'.
Interviews	Conducted to reflect emotions and experiences; and explore issues with a greater focus.	The possibility to direct the process of data collection. The possibility to collect the specific type of information required.	A great amount of time is required to arrange and conduct interviews and primary data collection. Additional costs might be incurred associated with arranging and conducting interviews, traveling, etc. Potential for interviewee bias.
Documentation review	Conducted to study issues that have been developed over a specific period of time.	Possibility to retrieve comprehensive information.	Challenges associated with access to documentation. Inflexibility of the research process.

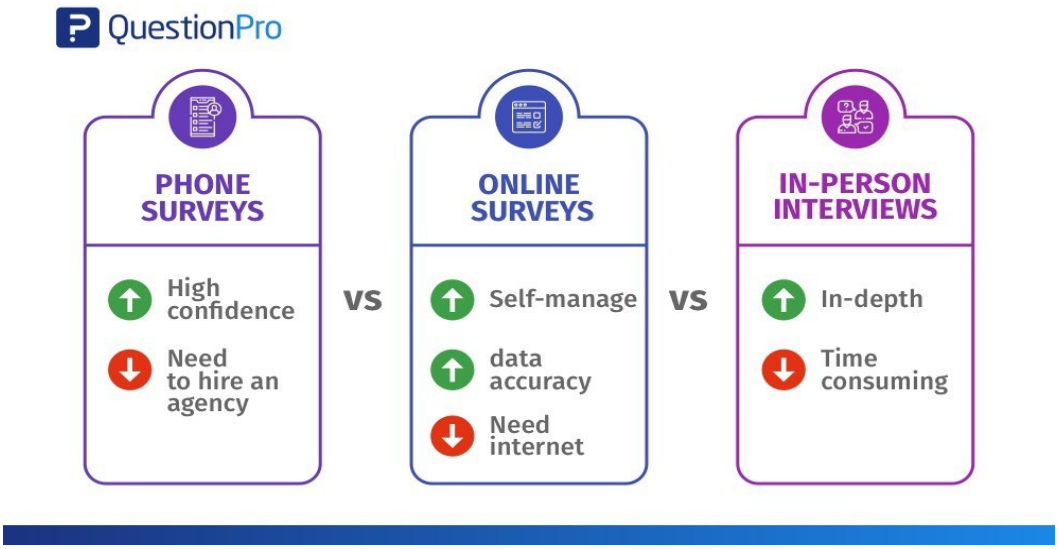

Figure 5.4: Data Collection: Definition, Methods, Example and Design/QuestionPro

(iii) Advantages of Survey Method

Surveys can be conducted faster and cheaper as compared to the other methods of primary data collection such as observation and experiments. Primary data gathered through surveys are relatively easy to analyze. Among the different methods (tools) of data gathering for research purposes, the survey method (tool) is preferred by many researchers due to its various advantages, strengths, and benefits, which as presented in the following:

(a) High Representativeness

Surveys provide a high level of general capability in representing a large population. Due to the usual huge number of people who answers a survey, the data being gathered possess a better description of the relative characteristics of the general population involved in the study. As compared to the other methods (tools) of data gathering, surveys can extract data that are near to the exact attributes of the larger population.

(b) Low Costs

When conducting surveys, you only need to pay for the production of survey questionnaires. If you need a larger sample of the general population, you can allot an incentive in cash or kind, which can be as low as $2 per person. On the other hand, the other data gathering methods (tools) such as focus groups and personal interviews require researchers to pay more.

(c) Convenient Data Gathering

Surveys can be administered to the participants in a variety of ways. The questionnaires can simply be sent via e-mail or fax or can be administered through the Internet. Nowadays, the online survey method has been the most popular way of gathering data from the target participants. Aside from the convenience of data gathering, researchers can collect data from people around the globe.

(d) Good Statistical Significance

Because of the high representativeness brought about by the survey method, it is often easier to find statistically significant results than the other data gathering methods. Multiple variables can also be effectively analyzed using surveys.

(e) Little or No Observer's Subjectivity

Surveys are ideal for scientific research studies because they provide all the participants with a standardized stimulus. With such high reliability obtained, the researcher's own biases are eliminated.

(f) Precise Results

As questions in the survey should undergo scrutiny and standardization, they provide uniform definitions to all the subjects who are to answer the questionnaires. Thus, there is a greater precision in terms of measuring the data gathered.

(iv) Disadvantages of Survey Method

Surveys also have their following disadvantages and weak points that must be considered:

- In some cases, unwillingness or inability of respondents to provide information,
- The human bias of respondents, i.e. respondents providing inaccurate information,
- Differences in understanding: it is difficult to formulate questions in such a way that it will mean the same thing to each respondent.

(a) Inflexible Design

The survey that is used by the researcher from the very beginning, as well as the method of administering it, cannot be changed throughout the process of data gathering. Although this inflexibility can be viewed as a weakness of the survey method, this can also be strength because preciseness and fairness can both be exercised in the study.

(b) Not Ideal for Controversial Issues

Questions that bear controversies may not be precisely answered by the participants because of the probable difficulty of recalling the information related to them. The truth behind these controversies may not be relieved as accurately as when using alternative data gathering methods (tools) such as face-to-face interviews and focus groups.

(c) Possible Inappropriateness of Questions

Questions in surveys are always standardized before administering them to the subjects. The researcher is therefore forced to create questions that are general enough to accommodate the general population. However, these general questions may not be as appropriate for all the participants as they should be. A good example of this situation is administering a survey which focuses on affective variables, or variables that deal with emotions.

(d) A Glance at Advantages and Disadvantages of Surveys

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Relatively easy to administer, • Can be developed in less time (as compared to the other data-collection methods (tools), • Cost-effective, but the cost depends on survey mode, • It can be administered remotely via online (internet), mobile devices, mail, email, kiosk, or telephone. • Conducted remotely can reduce or prevent geographical dependence, • Capable of collecting data from a large number of respondents, • Numerous questions can be asked about a subject, giving extensive flexibility in data analysis, • With survey software, advanced statistical techniques can be utilized to analyze survey data to determine validity, reliability, and statistical significance,	• Respondents may not feel encouraged to provide accurate and honest answers, • Respondents may not feel comfortable in providing answers that unfavorably present themselves. • Respondents may not be fully aware of their reasons for any given answer because of a lack of memory on the subject, or even boredom. • Surveys with closed-ended questions may have a lower validity rate than the other question types. • Data errors due to question non-responses may exist. The number of respondents who choose to respond to a survey question may be different from those who choose not to respond, thus creating bias. • Survey question answer options could lead to unclear data because certain answer options may be interpreted differently by respondents. For example, the answer option "somewhat agree" may represent different things to different subjects, and have its meaning to each respondent. 'Yes,' or

including the ability to analyze multiple variables. • A broad range of data can be collected (e.g., attitudes, opinions, beliefs, values, behavior, factual). • Standardized surveys are relatively free from several types of errors.	'no' answer options can also be problematic. Respondents may answer "no" if the option "only once" is not available. • Customized surveys can run the risk of containing certain types of errors.

5.3.3 Observing and Testing in Research

Observing and testing are some other tools of data collection in social sciences. Observation is a tool of data collection but there is no well-designed model of observation. It varies from person to person, place to place, and topic to topic. There should be some parameters set before collecting the data. In this type of data collection tool, five senses are used to collect the data preferably eyes and ears are used more frequently. In this type of data collection, the researcher finds an extreme level of difficulties in our scenario especially to get permission from the institutions to observe their activities. However, in cases somebody has informally observed a phenomenon that needs to be transformed into data for a study, certain rules can be set up to arrange the data and then to analyze that data.

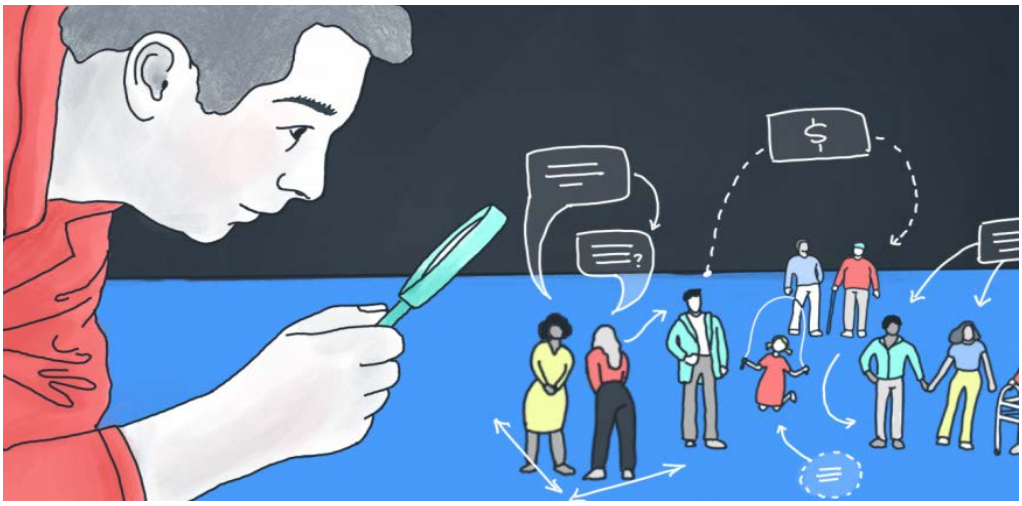

Figure 5.5: Research Tools1: Observation-Computer Sciences, Communication…/Conference

Testing is to compare items in terms of some criterion or set of criteria. Testing, which is at the heart of many scientific and technical disciplines, is much broader and more complex than this discussion of it. Nevertheless, simple testing is often a useful method of collecting information. Before you begin a test, you must decide what type of information you are seeking. In the other words, what questions should the test answer? In the case of deciding which photocopier to be bought, the questions should reflect the users' concerns. They become your criteria, the standards you will use to evaluate the two machines. Typical questions might be:

- Which one produces 100 copies faster?
- Which one makes clearer back-to-back copies?
- Which one generates less heat?

After determining suitable questions, you have people who use both machines and then record their answers to your questions. To record the answers, you need a recording form much like the one used for surveys.

Testing is also a tool of data collection, in this type of data collection, the researcher prepares a test for the respondents, they solve the test and their results become the data. This type of tool is used in educational research which is experimental. Pre-test, post-test strategies are used in this type of research. The purpose of experimental research in educational spheres is to check the authenticity of teaching methodologies used at different levels of education, the significance of syllabus taught to the students, role of administration, the contribution of good learning environment, participation of parents in teaching-learning process, problems faced by the students, causes of inefficiency in students of different levels of education, etc. In this respect, teaching methodologies, and syllabi are used in the concerned classes and at the end of a scheduled period, the students' efficiency is examined. The test scores they have obtained through various pre- and post-tests are put in the tables or graphs, and the results are achieved in the form of averages and percentages. So testing is a very supportive tool of data collection in quantitative research.

(i) Observational Research

Observation research is often qualitative (equally quantitative) research technique where researchers observe participants' on-going behaviour in a natural situation. Depending on the type of observation research and the goal of the study, the market researcher will have varying levels of participation in the study. Sometimes the researcher will insert themselves into the environment, and the other times, the researcher will not intervene in the setting and observe from a distance or in a laboratory setting. The purpose of this type of research is to gather more reliable insights. While doing research you have several different research methodologies at

your disposal, including surveys, interviews, observations, etc. Using observational data is the best when one of the following situations applies:

- You need to gather sensitive information, and you don't trust your participants will be honest with their self-reporting.
- You need to understand how or what of a research question.
- The topic is new, and you need robust data to explain consumer behavior.
- When behavior in a natural setting is vital to your research question.
- When behavior in a controlled setting is critical to your research question.
- If you are concerned that self-reported data about behaviors will differ from actual actions, even if it's unintentional.
- When you need more information about a specific research question to formulate a more complete and accurate survey.
- If any of these situations describe you or your current research state, then an observational study may be just what you need.

(a) Three Types of Observational Research

When it comes to observational research, you have three different types of methodologies: controlled observations, naturalistic observations, and participant observations.

i. Controlled Observation

Controlled observations are typically a structured observation that takes place in a psych lab. The researcher has a question in mind and controls many of the variables, including participants, observation location, time of the study, circumstances surrounding the research, and more. During this type of study, the researcher will often create codes that represent different types of behaviors. That way, instead of writing a detailed report, they can classify behavior into different categories and analyze the data with more ease.

Advantages and Limitations of the Controlled Observation

The advantages of controlled observation include:

- You can make an observation schedule for your sampling, and have the other market researchers use the same codes, if they replicate the study. This helps test for reliability.
- The coded data is easy to analyze and quantify.
- Controlled studies aren't as time-consuming.

Limitations of a controlled observation include:

- It may be challenging to determine the validity of the study if participants know they are being watched.

ii. Naturalistic Observation

Naturalistic observation is another type of observation research method used by researchers. This type of observation is when researchers study the behaviors of participants in a natural surrounding. There are typically no predetermined behavioral codes. Instead, the researcher will take rigorous notes and code the data later.

Advantages of Naturalistic Observation

Following are the advantages of Naturalistic Observation:

- The study ensures validity when participants are in their natural setting.
- This type of study can generate new ideas and research questions.
- It opens researchers' minds to possibilities they might not have considered before.
- Researchers can collect authentic data and avoid any potential problems with self-reported data.

Limitations of Naturalistic Observation

Following are the limitations of Naturalistic Observation:

- You can't control different variables, making it difficult to replicate the study and test for reliability.
- It may be challenging to conduct this type of study on a wide scale.
- You have to use skilled researchers, so you don't risk missing critical behavioral data.
- You aren't (Please avoid contracted forms in the formal writing) able to manipulate any variables.

(c) Participant Observation

The last type of observation method is participant observation. This is a type of naturalistic observation in the fact that researchers will observe participants in their natural habitat. The difference is market researchers will insert themselves into the environment.

Advantages of Participant Observation

Following are the advantages of Participant Observation:

- You can control some of the variables by being part of the natural environment.
- You can still observe participants in their natural habitat, even if they know you are part of the study.
- You can avoid incorrect self-reported data through this method of observation as well.

Limitations of Participant Observation

Following are the limitations of Participant Observation:

- It can be challenging to take notes openly without blowing your cover as the market researcher.
- If you can't take notes openly, you'll have to rely on memory for note-taking, and memory can be faulty.
- If a researcher becomes too involved in the study, they could become less objective. This could threaten the validity of the study.
- Each type of study will help you gather insight into how customers and participants behave, but they also come with their own set of limitations.

5.4 COLLECTING PUBLISHED INFORMATION

This section discusses the basic techniques for gathering published information. As with all writing projects, you must plan carefully. You must develop a search strategy, search helpful sources, and record your findings. With its thousands of books and periodicals, the library can be an overwhelming place. The problem is to locate the relatively small number of sources that you need. To do so, develop a "search strategy" ("Tracking Information") by determining your audience, generating questions, predicting probable sources, and searching for "keys."

Figure 5.6: Non-profit-Other Items of Note (Spring 2015)/BKC,CPAs, PC

5.4.1 Develop a Search Strategy

Without developing a search strategy, a researcher may face various organizational hindrances and he/she will not be able to collect the relevant and required information. In this respect, the researcher needs to develop a search strategy based on the selection of the following relevant storehouses of knowledge:

- Books relevant to the issue understudy,
- Journals related to the research area,
- Relevant websites available.

Sometimes, the researcher faces a lot of difficulties in finding the required books. For this purpose, he/she should contact the libraries or e-libraries to collect the relevant books. Otherwise, the researcher will lose motivation and stop working on the study. Similarly, as it is a known fact that from the lower level to the top-level research journals are available on the internet websites but most of them are paid and one cannot download them even. However, there are certain universities or higher education organizations which have excess to those knowledge treasures. The researcher should make the list of books, journals, and websites and then after making close contact with the concerned research groups or search engines, should work hard to collect the required information.

5.4.2 Search Helpful Sources

As mentioned above, the priority of the researcher should be to make a list of relevant and helpful sources and then attempt to collect the information. In some cases, the researchers are very skilful, technical, and knowledgeable but they have a lack of the helpful sources, so their research work cannot achieve the desired goals because research is not a stagnant or stationary process rather it is a continuous process and no research is possible in a vacuum. Every researcher has to go through previous studies to connect his research with future endeavors. But it is only possible with access to the helpful sources. There are some researchers whose basic understanding is very poor and their research knowledge is also not satisfactory but they can access and collect information from the helpful sources. That is why, their work although it does not become extraordinary yet they are successful in completing it and making a mild type of contribution to the discoveries and research innovation. So the important point is that along with the correct and desired research skills, efforts to target the exact helpful sources are greatly required.

5.4.3 Record Your Findings

Findings of the research are the key features of the research which can take the researcher to arrive at a certain conclusion and he may be able to give recommendations based on the conclusions. For this purpose, findings should be recorded as there is a lot of efforts put together to reach the findings. In the other

words, the research selects an issue, sets objectives, formulates the hypotheses, reads the books, theories, and previous ideas to bridge them to the research methodology. Doing this, he selects the data collection tools and then decides about the analytical and statistical tools to analyze the collected data and after that he finds the results or gets the findings of the research. Therefore, if the findings are not recorded well, entire efforts, energy, and time allocated will fail the research. Thus, the researcher should pay heed to record the findings.

5.4.4 Determine Your Audience

As in any writing situation, determine your audience and their needs. Are you writing for specialists or non-specialists? Do they already understand the concepts in the report? Will they use your report for reference or background information, or will they act on your findings? Experts expect to see information from the standard sources. Thus quoting from a specialized encyclopaedia is more credible than using a popular one, and mentioning articles from technical journals is more credible than citing material from the popular press. However, in some areas, particularly computing but also in subjects like photography, monthly magazines are often the best source of technical information. For computers, Macworld, PC World, and SUN Expert are excellent sources for technical decisions; Non-specialists may not know standard sources, but they expect you to have consulted them.

5.4.5 Generate Questions

Generate questions about the topic and its subtopics. These questions fall into the same general categories as those for interviews: What are the basic facts? What is its significance? They include:

- What is it made of?
- How is it made?
- Who uses it?
- Where is it used?
- What is its history?
- Do experts disagree about any of these questions?
- Who makes it?
- What are its effects? How is it regulated?

Such questions help you focus your research, enabling you to select source materials and to categorize information as you collect it.

5.4.6 Predict Probable Sources

All concepts have a growth pattern, from new and unusual to established and respected: Throughout the pattern, they are discussed in predictable—but very

different—types of sources. New and unusual information is available only from a few people; probably in the form of letters, conversations, e-mail, answers to literary queries, and personal websites. More established information appears in conference proceedings and technical journal articles. Established in, formation appears in textbooks, encyclopaedias, and general periodicals and newspapers ("Tracking Information"), if you understand this growth pattern, you can predict where to look helpful ways to use the pattern by age and by technical level. Use the W. lowing guidelines to help you find relevant material quickly.

5.4.7 Consider the Age of the Information

If your topic demands information le than a year old, consult periodicals, government documents, annual reviews, and on-line databases. Write letters, call individuals, ask on a listserv, or search the Web (see "Web Searching" below). If your topic requires older, standard information, consult bibliographies, annual reviews, yearbooks, encyclopaedias, almanacs, and textbooks.

Figure 5.7: Information Age and its Impact on Jobs Around the World/ Desi Entrepreneurs

5.4.8 Consider the Technical Level of the Information

If you need information at a high technical level, use technical journals, interviews with professionals, and specialized encyclopaedias or handbooks. On the job, also use technical reports from the company's technical information department. If you need general information, use popular magazines and newspapers. Books can provide both technical and general information.

5.4.9 Search for "Keys"

A helpful concept to guide your searching is the "key," an item that writers constantly repeat. Look for keywords and key documents.

- **Find keywords**
  Keywords are the specific words or phrases that all writers in particular field use to discuss a topic. For instance, if you start to read about the Internet, you will quickly find the terms navigation and hyperlink in many sources. Watch for terms like these, and master their definitions. If you need more information on a term, look in specialized encyclopaedias, the card catalogue, periodical indexes, abstracts, and databases. Keywords can also lead you to the other useful terms through cross-references and. indexes.

5.4.10 Watch for Key Documents

As you collect articles, review their bibliographies. Some works will be cited repeatedly. These documents—whether articles, books, or technical reports—are key documents. If you were searching for information about the World Wide Web, you would quickly discover that three or four books are the "bibles" of the Web. You should find and review those books. Key documents contain discussions that experts agree are basic to understanding the topic. To research efficiently, read these documents as soon as you become aware of them.

5.4.11 Internet Research

The internet is a social phenomenon, a tool, and also a (field) site for research. Depending on the role the internet plays in the research project or how it is conceptualized by the researcher, different epistemological, logistical, and ethical considerations will come into play. The term "Internet" originally described a network of computers that made possible the decentralized transmission of information. Now, the term serves as an umbrella for innumerable technologies, devices, capacities, uses, and social spaces. Within these technologies, many ethical and methodological issues arise, and as such, internet research calls for new models of ethical evaluation and consideration.

Because the types of interaction and information transmission made possible by the internet vary so widely, researchers find it necessary to define the concept more narrowly within individual studies. This is complicated by the fact that studies of and on the internet cut across all of the academic disciplines. This document uses the following working definitions:

Internet research encompasses inquiry that:

(a) Utilizes the internet to collect data or information, e.g., through online interviews, surveys, archiving, or automated means of data scraping;
(b) studies how people use and access the internet, e.g., through collecting and observing activities or participating on social network sites, listservs, websites, blogs, games, virtual worlds, or the other online environments or contexts;
(c) utilizes or engages in data processing, analysis, or storage of datasets, databanks, and/or repositories available via the.
(d) Studies software, code, and internet technologies;
(e) examines the design of structures of systems, interfaces, pages, and elements;
(f) employs visual and textual analysis, semiotic analysis, content analysis, or the other methods of analysis to study the web and/or internet-facilitated images, writings, and media forms;
(g) studies large scale production, use, and regulation of the internet by governments, industries, corporations, and military forces.

Internet research is not machine-specific or dependent, and we recognize the impact of smart devices and increased mobility on internet activities. It is important to note that definitions of and experiences with these contexts vary widely. Technological convergence collapses many contexts and categories in evolving and sometimes surprising ways. The internet mediates everyday life in industrialized and developing cultures, whether or not we are actively accessing the web. Thus, internet research should be considered in its broadest sense.

5.5 ETHICS IN RESEARCH

Ethics are the basic principles of human life that make the activities authentic and reliable. Similarly, in research, there are certain parameters set by the research institutions and higher education commission which must be obeyed. Research ethics are moral principles that guide researchers to conduct and report research without deception or intention to harm the participants of the study or members of the society as a whole, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Practicing ethical guidelines, while conducting and reporting research, is essential to establish the validity of your research.

In Pakistan, malpractices have been observed on part of the people sitting on the higher places even those who are liable to make important educational decisions and institutional policies. Such practices not only create a bad image of the country, but it also violates the rights of the deserving people and the result is a violation of merit. Unethical practices include plagiarized work, copy paste tradition, and theft of ideas of the other people. In this concern, HEC (Higher Education Commission) Pakistan has introduced plagiarism policy for the students of higher education, researchers, and scientists. For this purpose, Turnitin software has been introduced to check the wide-spreading menace of unethical jobs in the country. 20 percent similarity index is allowed in any type of research and no single source should show similarity more than 5 percent. That is why connections are given to every degree-awarding institution to clear only those research articles or research theses which abide by the set criteria of HEC. This strict check and balance has given birth to rephrasing and paraphrasing of the work of the other researchers and including it in the literature review section of the research studies, which has affected the thorough readings of the books, journals, and the other studies badly. Therefore, all of the concerned people should ensure the quality of research work in their respective institutions.

Figure 5.8: What Is Ethics in Research & Why Is It Important? /NIEHS-NIH

5.5.1 Ethical Standards — Researchers Should Follow

- Avoid any risk of considerably harming people, the environment, or property unnecessarily.
- Obtain informed consent from all involved in the study.
- Preserve privacy and confidentiality whenever possible.
- Take special precautions when involving populations or animals which may not be considered to understand fully the purpose of the study.
- Not offer big rewards or enforce binding contracts for the study. This is especially important when people are somehow reliant on the reward.
- Do not plagiarize the work of the others.
- Not skew their conclusions based on funding.
- Do not commit science fraud, falsifying research, or otherwise conduct scientific misconduct.
- Do not use the position as a peer reviewer to give sham peer reviews to punish or damage fellow scientists.

Exercises

1. Develop a research plan and implement it.
    a. Create a list of five to eight questions about a topic you want to research. For each question, indicate the kind of resource you need (book, recent article, website) and a probable search source (Applied Science and Technology Index, Engineering Index, library electronic catalog, Google, AltaVista). Explain your list to a group of two or three. Ask for their evaluation, changing your plan as they suggest.
    b. Create a list of five to ten key-words. In groups of two or three, evaluate the words. Try to delete half of them and replace them with better ones.
    c. Select a database (e.g., Compendex) or a Web search engine (e.g., Google).
    d. Conduct a subject search of your library's computerized catalog. Start with a general term (Internet) and then using the system's capabilities; limit the search in at least three different ways (e.g., Internet, not e-mail, Internet and manufacturing engineering, Internet or World Wide Web). Print out the bibliography from each search. Write a description of the process you used to derive the bibliographies, and evaluate the effectiveness of your methods.
    e. Write a memo to your classmates on at least two tips that will make their use of the catalog easier.
    f. Select a topic of interest. Generate a list of three to five questions about the topic. Read a relevant article in one standard reference source.

Based on the article, answer at least one of your questions and pose at least two more questions about the topic.

2. Write a memo in which you analyze and evaluate an index or abstracting service. Use a service from your field of interest, or ask your instructor to assign one. Explain which periodicals and subjects the service lists. Discuss whether it is easy to use. For instance, does it have a cross-referencing system? Can a reader find keywords easily? Explain at what level of knowledge the abstracts are aimed: Beginner? Expert? The audience for your report is the other class members.

3. Write a memo in which you analyze and evaluate a reference book or website in your field of interest. Explain its arrangement, sections, and intended audience. Is it aimed at a lay or a technical audience? Is it introductory or advanced? Can you use it easily? Your audience is the other class members.

4. Form into groups of three. One person is the interviewer, one the interviewee, and one the recorder. Your goal is to evaluate an interview. The interviewer asks open and closed questions to discover basic facts about a technological topic that the interviewee knows well. The recorder keeps track of the types of questions, the answers, and the effectiveness of each question in generating a useful answer. Present an oral report that explains and evaluates your process. Did open questions work better? Did the echo technique work?

5. Write a short research report explaining a recent innovation in your area of interest. Your goal is to recommend whether your company should become committed to this innovation. Consult at least six recent sources. Use quotations, paraphrases, and one of the citation formats explained in Appendix B (pp. 571-596). Organize your material into sections that give the reader a good sense of the dimensions of the topic. The kind of information you might present include:
   a. Problems in the development of innovation and potential solutions.
   b. Issues debated in the topic area.
   c. Effects of the innovation on your field or the industry in general.
   d. Methods of implementing the innovation.

6. Your instructor might require that you form groups to research and write this report. If so, he or she will give you a more detailed schedule, but you must formulate questions, research sources of information, and write the report. Use the guidelines for group work outlined in Chapter 3.

7. You (or your group, if your instructor so designates) are assigned to purchase a word processing package for your campus computer lab (or your company network). Research three actual programs and recommend one. Investigate your situation carefully. Talk to users, discover the capabilities of the current computers (RAM, etc.), discover their ability to support this new program (training), and investigate cost and site licenses. Read several reviews.

8. Following one of the documentation formats, write a brief research paper in which you complete the process you began.
   a. In your chosen database or Web search engine, use your search words and combinations of them to generate a bibliography.
   b. Read two to five articles that will answer one of your questions.

9. Write a brief report in which you explain the questions you asked, the method you used, and the results you achieved.

10. Divide into groups of three or four. Construct a three- or four-item questionnaire to give to your classmates; Write an introduction, use open and closed questions, and tabulate the answers. At a later class period, give an oral report on the results. Use easy topics, such as demographic inquiries (size of each class member's native city, year in college, length of employment) or inquiries into their knowledge of some common area in a field chosen by the group (such as using search engines on the Web).

11. Interview four people in a workplace to determine their attitude toward a technology (fax, phone system, PDAs, wireless printing, instant messaging). Present to an administrator a memo recommending a course of action based on the responses. One likely topic is the need for training.

12. Write the report your instructor assigns.
   a. Describe your actions, the number of Items, and type of information, the value of the entries.
   b. Answer the question in several paragraphs. See Appendix B for listing sources.
   c. Describe your database or search engine. Explain why you selected it; whether it was easy to use; whether it was helpful.
   d. Describe your article. Summarize it and explain how it relates to your topic.
   e. List two questions that you can research further as a result of reading your article.

13. After you have completed your writing assignment, write a learning report, a memo to your instructor. Explain, using details from your work, what new things you have learned or old things confirmed. Use some or this entire list of topics: Writing to accommodate an audience, presenting your identity, selecting a strategy, organizing, formatting, creating and using visual aids, using an appropriate style, developing a sense of what is "good enough" for any of the previous topics. Besides, explain why you are proud of your recent work, and tell what aspect of writing you want to work on for the next assignment.

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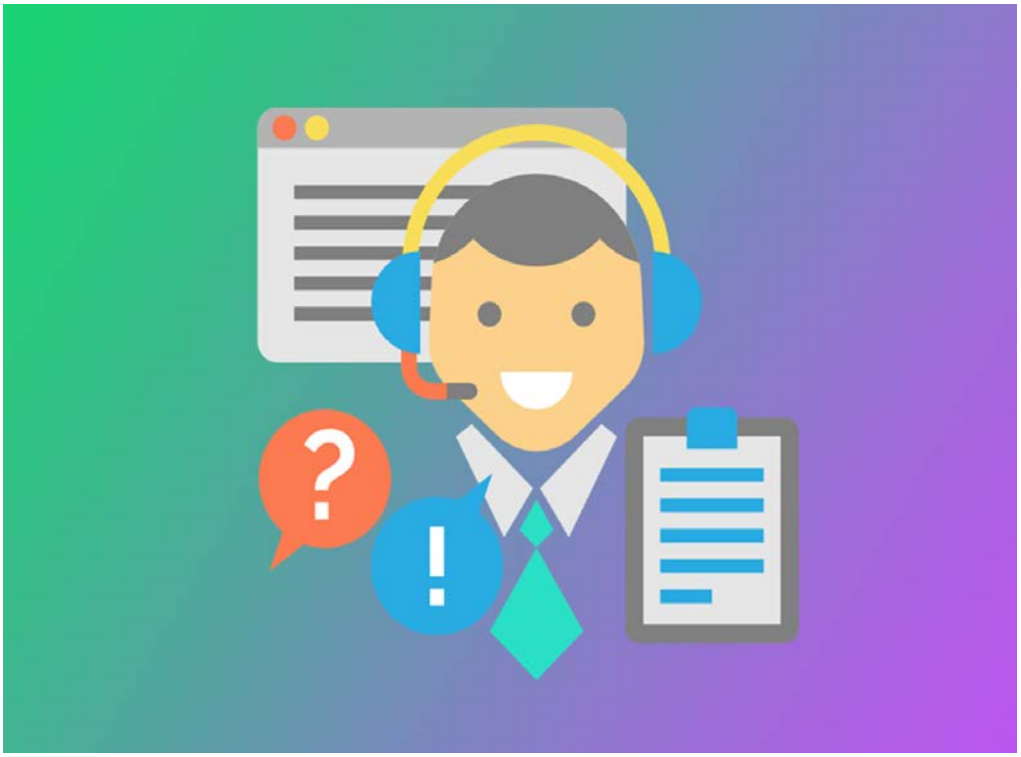
Unit–6

DESIGNING PAGES



Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

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INTRODUCTION

Unit 6 is a detailed description of page designing, an important characteristic feature of technical writing. Designing a page is the task, for which multi-faceted skills are required on part of the technical writer for conveying the message effectually to the targeted audience. The desirable skills, for the said purpose, are all inclusive of understanding the technicalities involved in designing the pages. For example, comprehending the significance of visual features as well as grabbing their organization to reveal content, especially in developing Power Point or Google Slides presentations. And for powerful technical presentations it is required from the technical writers to improve their knowledge of font styles, font sizes, headers, footers and pagination, etc. Moreover, the technical writers should also know the principles and rules of headings, heading levels, and the functions of the headings. All these substantial characteristic features of page designing are elaborated in this unit. Additionally, this unit also highlights the other indispensable necessities of page designing like selecting margins and spacing, designing text features to convey meaning, making columns, choosing line length and justification as well as developing a style sheet and template. Dear Students, you have to practice all these features of page designing; so only reading this unit will not suffice you. Consequently, make sure to implement whatever you learn from this unit. In order to accomplish this task, you have to attempt not only the worksheets, provided here, but also practically develop some sample presentations on topics of your own choice but they should have some relevance with technical communication.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

1. Understand the technicalities involved in designing the pages;
2. Comprehend the significance of visual features to reveal content;
3. Improve their knowledge of font styles, font sizes, headers, footers, pagination, etc.;
4. Grab the organization of visual features in a document; and
5. Know the principles and rules of headings, heading levels, and the functions of the headings.

6.1 INTRODUCTION TO PAGE DESIGNING

An independent author has to make a long journey from the commencement of the content to its final document. Earlier in the past, book writing, and publishing had different ways to adopt which were comparatively simple. But nowadays, when authors get started publishing a book, their projects generally contain plans for both print books and eBooks. This makes a lot of sense. The popularity of E-readers has grown up now and, it is imperative to safeguard the book one has worked so hard on is accessible to readers no matter which format they favour. Before making a discussion of designing pages, it is pertinent to see the difference between print books and eBooks. For example:

- Print books can be manufactured in different sizes and proportions, while eBooks are mostly just a text file.
- Some fonts or layouts might work great in print books, but will mostly be lost in eBooks.
- The basis of the design of print books is quite different than the design for eBooks.

However, our basic concern is to focus on print books and their page designing. According to Tyson P. (1988), a well-designed document is the one 'from which readers can quickly get accurate information' (P. 27). Similarly, Karen Schriver (1997) is a document design expert who describes that the book or design should disclose the structure of the document; integrate the visual logic to make the structural relationship clear. This unit includes the use of visual features to reveal content, use of typed features to convey meaning and to develop a style sheet as well as the template.

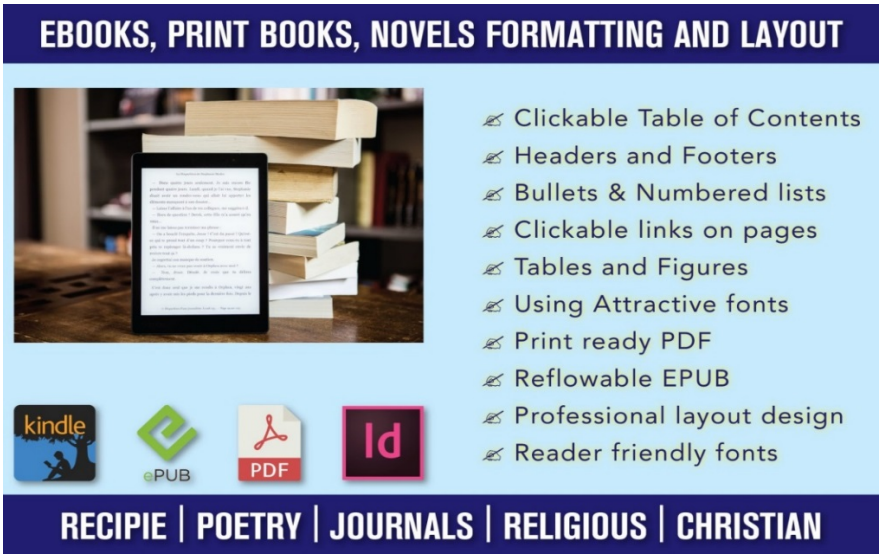


Figure 6.1: ebook format for kindle and print book format/Fiverr

6.2 USING VISUAL FEATURES TO REVEAL CONTENT

Visual features are very important in page designing which bring content to light, include space and chunks; bullets; head systems; and headers, pagination, and rules.

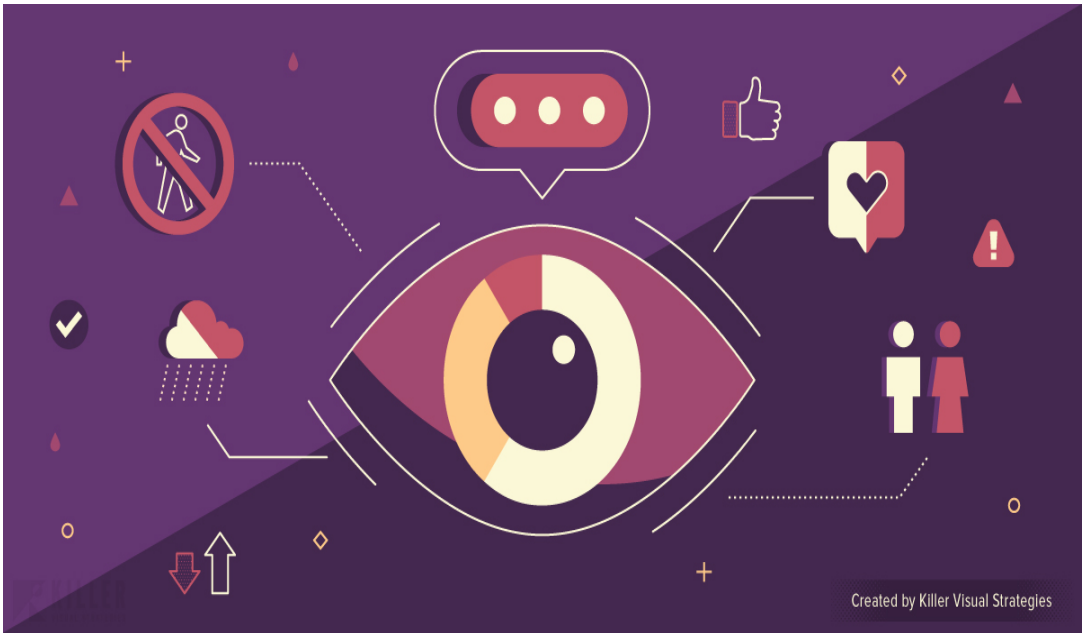


Figure 6.2: Basics of Visual Communication:
Marketing Strategies for a Visual…/Killer Visual Strategies

6.2.1 White Space and Chunks

White space is the central feature of a document which is any place where there is no text. As we know that there is a space between the lines and space between the paragraphs as well. This white space is liable to create chunks which are blocks of text. These are chunks that reveal logical structure to readers. It is significant to explicate that the rule for creating chunks is quite simple. In the other words, white space is used to make the individual units of meaning stand out.

6.2.2 Bullets

In typography, a bullet is a symbol used to denote items in a list. For instance:

- Item 1
- Item 2
- Item 3

The bullet symbol can take a diversity of shapes including circular, square, diamond, or arrow. In this respect, word processor software suggests an extensive assortment of shapes and colors. There are various regular symbols, such as:

Table 6.1: Names for Bullet Symbols

Symbol	Bullet name
*	asterisk
-	hyphen
.	period
o	lowercase
☞	index symbol

6.2.3 Head Systems

Head may be a word or a phrase which is used to denote the contents of the section, which follows a heading system. The head system can be called a pattern of heads/levels used to indicate the content and the hierarchy of the sections present in the document. Heads facilitate the readers to get information as these heads are written in the table of contents, list of illustrations, or on the index sections. There are certain international standard styles to follow. In Pakistan, APA writing style is mostly used which prescribes five heading levels. APA style is used for formal thesis writing, formal report writing, or writing a research article. However, for a teacher's assignment, different styles may be demanded and vice versa.

(i) Heading Levels

Following is an extract from chapter 2 of the Ph.D. thesis of Dr. Arshad Mehmood, supervisee of the author of this book to make the heading levels understandable for the readers. In this respect, the first two headings are the main headings that start with chapter No. 2. Obviously, media studies is the first heading, so it is numbered as 2.1. In the same way, ‘the concept of news’; and ‘the notion of headlines’ are the second and the third main headings, numbered as 2.2. and 2.3 respectively. 2.4 is another main heading that carries sub-headings following heading numbers, for example, 2.4.1; 2.4.2; 2.4.3; 2.4.4 respectively.

Figure 6.3: Model Extract (for understanding the heading levels)

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Media Studies

Media studies are related to the way how public opinion is constructed and shifted to a certain direction through discursive use of language. It is believed that language is a powerful instrument, especially when it is used intentionally……

2.2 The Concept of News

The people all over the world are informed through media because it gathers the information from various news events, then it shapes that information in the form of news stories and modifies them to be informative in order to keep the audience (readers and listeners) up-to-date…….

2.3 The Notion of Headlines

In general, the exposition of the notion of a headline is essential because the researcher aims to study the headlines related to political discourse presented in three broadsheet Pakistani English newspapers and the impact of this discourse on shaping the opinion of public…….

2.4 Early Approaches to Media Communication

Print media includes the newspaper text that is used for communication purposes. It shows that the language used in newspapers provides important information to the audience (readers) about certain issues and events to make them aware of whatever is happening around them in the world.

a. A simplified model of communication
b. Linguistic Model
c. Harold Lasswell Model
d. Klapper's Model of Minimal Effect

2.4.1 Simplified Model of Communication

In order to gain insight into the approaches presented for media communication, it is apposite to explicate that different research orientations have their links to a simplified model of communication, which according to Shannaon & Weaver (1949) have been derived from the information theory.

2.4.2 Linguistic Model

The linguistic model was introduced by Jakobson (1963). Based on this model, the communication process taken place in this way includes the elements like transmitter, message, receiver, context, code and channel, which means that 'context' has been introduced in addition to the model mentioned earlier.

2.4.3 Harold Lasswell Model

Lasswell's (1965) Model emerged from the previous models which presented the idea of the sender, receiver, channel, and message. These models have limitations because the element of context that ascertains the process of conveying the message to each other is lacking and cannot be applied to the area of mass communication.

2.4.4 Klapper's Model of Minimal Effect

Contributing to the perspective mentioned above, Klapper (1960) introduced the model of minimal (or limited effect). This approach focuses on the fact that selectiveness is linked to the network of social relations which forms the environment where the individual lives and that constitutes groups he belongs to, and not so much to the individuals' psychological processes.

(i) Functions of Headings

Headings are the typical topographies of technical documents and serve numerous imperative functions, for example:

- They deliver an organizational outline of the document.
- They exhibit a logical expansion of ideas.
- They indicate the hierarchical relationship of ideas (headings and sub-headings).
- They permit the reader to scan and read selectively.
- They enlarge the readability of the document by providing breaks and white space.

(ii) General Principles for Designing Headings

Designing the headings in the document, the designer should keep in mind these general principles:

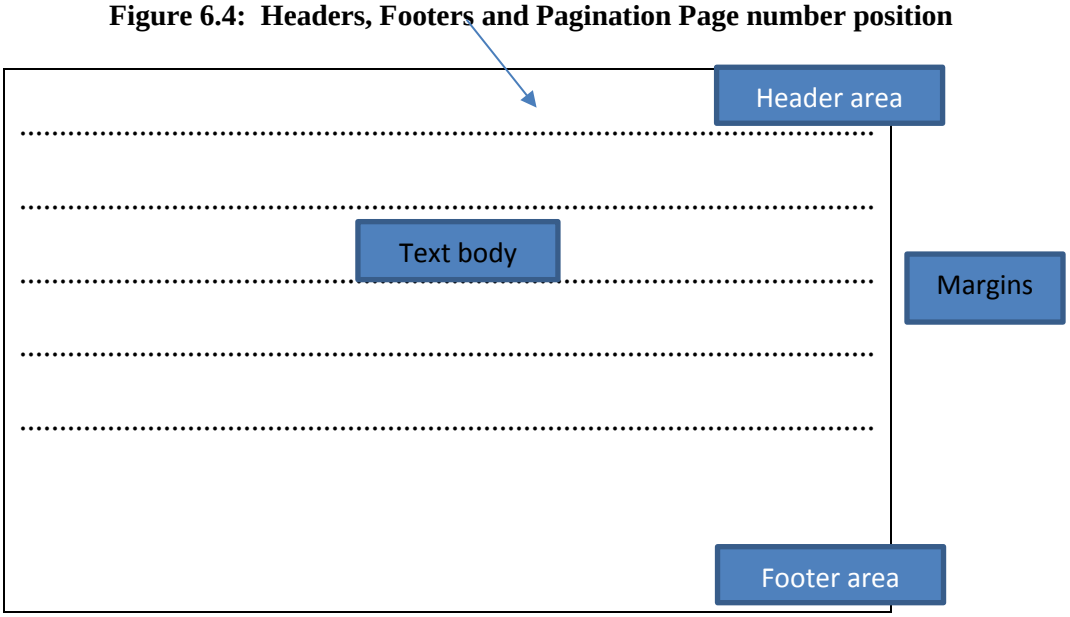
- **Classified Connexion of Ideas**: The designer should use font size, boldness, typography, and color to designate the comparative standing of ideas and how they interconnect. In general, first-level headings are larger and bolder than the second and subsequent level headings.
- **Consistency**: It should be kept in mind that every section must have a heading. It should be ensured that headings at each level are consistent in design (font, size, color and indentation, etc.) Using consistent, parallel phrasing is appreciative.
- **Readability**: The author should leave passive space above and below headings. There should always be slightly more space above the heading than below it. As a general guideline, 2-4 headings per page in short reports should be used. Overuse of headings should be avoided.

- **Specificity**: The author should use **descriptive** headings that inform the reader of the content of each section. Vague headings should be avoided. Headings may use a numeric system if there are many sub-sections.

6.3 HEADERS OR FOOTERS, PAGINATION AND RULES

Headers or footers, pagination, and rules are the other three features of visual layout. The first feature, headers or footers appears in the upper or lower margin of the page. They are generally used to name the section of the document for the help of the reader. Page numbers are also used to facilitate the reader who has access to these page numbers from the table of contents section of the document. They may appear at the top right, top left, center top of the page, or they may appear on the bottom left, bottom right, bottom center of the page according to the requirement or demand of the document format. Normally, both headers and footers and page numbers are presented in different type size or font as compared to the text body of the document. Moreover, concerning the rules, as mentioned above in the heading, these are the lines on the page that act like heads. These lines divide the text into recognizable parts that are used to indicate the hierarchy on the page. Following is the figure 6.4 which shows headers or footers, pagination and rules:

Figure 6.4: Headers, Footers and Pagination Page number position



6.4 MARGINS AND SPACING

Margin is the space left above, below, on the right side and the left side of the page, which not only beautifies the look of the page, it also makes the text more vivid and easily understandable. It is a normal practice to leave margins of at least one inch on all sides of your paper, thesis, or research article. However, for the documents, which need to be binded, like that of books, should have been left their left side margin with at least the space of 2-2.5 inches for the binding and to avoid the text disappeared within the binding. Page numbers will appear within the top margin, but no other text should extend into the margins. Indent five to seven spaces to begin paragraphs. Double-space the text of your paper or follow the guidelines of the selected standard international format.

6.5 DESIGNING TEXT FEATURES TO CONVEY MEANING

Highlighters are the text features that are used to convey meaning. They include font, font size, leading, columns and line length, and justification. Certain text may get a good personality, if its features are highlighted with an emphasis on words or group of words.

Highlighters attract the attention of the reader by being bold and eye-catching. They are of different types which are:

- **Boldface**
- *Italics*
- ALL CAPITALS
- Vertical lists
- Quotation marks

These highlighters create a good impression on the reader. He/she may go through only the boldface while using scanning, skimming strategies of reading a text. In this way, boldface makes the text more significant and separates it from the rest of the text. The second highlighter is the *Italics* used to designate a word or a phrase more prominent than its surrounding text. Italics are used preferably within the text to define the italicized word or the phrase. All capitals is another highlighter to facilitate the readership in focusing attention on certain text points. Mostly, the top-level heading uses all capitals. Vertical list is another type of highlighters which is designed and written vertically. It may attract the attention of the reader rather than the horizontal text which is often greater in volume. The author should make the lists on parallel rules to make it more organized and easily understandable.

Quotation marks are used to highlight the direct speech of the speaker and make it significant from the rest of the text.

6.6 FONT, FONT SIZE, LEADING, COLUMNS, LINE LENGTH AND JUSTIFICATION

These features help the reader to relate his/her ability to the text. They may look appropriate, inappropriate, helpful, or not helpful.

6.6.1 Font

Font/typeface is the style of a type which has a personality as some fonts look frivolous, others interesting, some serious, some others workaday. Every organization or institution follows a font of its own choice, so the writers should choose the font according to the guidelines of the organization. Fonts look in different shapes and sizes as Times New Roman, Algerian, Aharoni, Bodoni MT PO, Broadway and Aparatija.

Figure 6.5: Description of Different Font Styles

Times New Roman

Dr. Ali Ahmad Kharal is a very genius person. He was the external examiner of Mr. Arshad Qureshi, the resident of village Kakanni Bagh, District, Tehsil and P/O Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Algerian

DR. ALI AHMED KHARAL IS A VERY GENIUS PERSON. HE WAS THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER OF MR. ARSHAD QURESHI, THE RESIDENT OF VILLAGE KAKANNI BAGH, DISTRICT, TEHSIL AND P/O KOTLI AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR.

Aharoni

Dr. Ali Ahmed Kharal is a very genius person. He was the external examiner of Mr. Arshad Qureshi, the resident of village Kakanni Bagh, District, Tehsil and P/O Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Bodoni MT PO

Dr. Ali Ahmed Kharal is a very genius person. He was the external examiner of Mr. Arshad Qureshi, the resident of village Kakanni Bagh, District, Tehsil and P/O Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Broadway

Dr. Ali Ahmed Kharal is a very genius person. He was the external examiner of Mr. Arshad Qureshi, the resident of village Kakanni Bagh, District, Tehsil and P/O Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Aparatija

Dr. Ali Ahmed Kharal is a very genius person. He was the external examiner of Mr. Arshad Qureshi, the resident of village Kakanni Bagh, District, Tehsil and P/O Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

6.6.2 Font size

IT is the height of the letters which is measured in points. Common text sizes are 9, 10 and 12. Common heading sizes are 14, 18 and 24. Moreover, certain magazines use 10-point type whereas certain reports use 12 point. Font sizes affect the number of words in a line; if sizes are more or bigger ones, then there will be fewer words in a line, whereas if there are smaller font sizes used in the text, there will be more words in a line. Research articles and research theses demand 14 font size for the main headings and 12 font size with single/double space for sub-headings. However, certain research journals offer 10-point size for the text.

Table 6.1: Illustration of Font Sizes

Text	Font Size
Zinnia Musa	10
Zinnia Musa	12
Zinnia Musa	14
Zinnia Musa	16
Zinnia Musa	24

6.6.3 Leading

Amount of space between the lines is called leading which is measured in points and it is often greater than the font size. Some font styles may reflect smaller font size than others and vice versa. It is not generally a specific concern of the text designers because it is processed through automatically selected programs. But one thing is important to note that if leading is too little or even too much, it will look odd. Combining features should be used to orchestrate the text for readers.

6.6.4 Columns, Line Length and Justification

In technical writing, columns are of importance as they are a normal typed page considered as just one wide column. Various word processing programs permit multiple columns. Same happens with numerous types of documents as well. For example, magazines demand two columns and sometimes three columns. Research journals mostly follow one column. Some books follow one column, others permit two column text. Research thesis requires one column text whereas certain newsletters demand two column texts.

Line length also attracts the attention of the technical writer. It should include 16 words per line, however, it mostly depends on the font style and font size which affect the line length automatically and so it is not the most concern of the technical writer in this sense. One important thing to be noted is that in APA style first line of each paragraph should be indented which may affect the overall length of that very line on a greater extent.

Justification makes the lines and paragraphs more appropriate, looking attractive and improves readability. For example, the following is an unjustified paragraph:

Figure 6.6: Unjustified Paragraph

University of Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir has a very close connection with Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad because the former institution hosts the workshops of the students of the latter institution in its main campus situated at the beautiful city, Kotli.

Figure 6.7: Justified Paragraph

University of Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir has a very close connection with Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad because the former institution hosts the workshops of the students of the latter institution in its main campus situated at the beautiful city, Kotli.

Furthermore, the technical expert can use the computer key 'Control' + 'P' to justify the text or can select the paragraph, going to 'home' on the top computer bar and press the rightmost icon to justify the text.

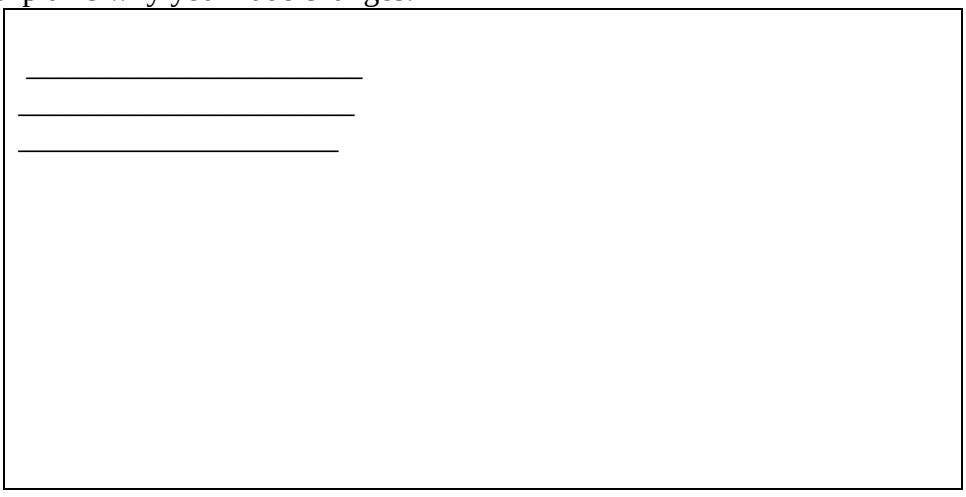
6.6.5 Developing a Style Sheet and Template

- Select margins.
- Decide how many levels of heads you will need.
- Select a style for each level.
- Select a location and format for your page numbers.
- Determine the number of columns and amount of space between them.
- Choose a font size and leading for the text.
- Place the appropriate information in the header or footer areas.
- Establish a method for handling vertical lists:
  - Determine how far you will indent the first line.
  - Use a bullet, number, letter, or some other character at the beginning of each item.
  - Determine how many spaces will follow the initial character.
  - Determine where the second and subsequent lines will start.
- Choose a method for distinguishing visuals from the text.
  - Will you use them in a box or use a rule above or the below.
  - Where will you place visuals within the texts?
  - How will your present captions?

1. Use principles of design ad visual logic to revise the following paragraph. Also eliminate unnecessary information.

(Text is added here) What is currently known about paragraph history is based on the work of the first British and American composers, humanists and philologists from the end of the 19th century. Alexander Bain and his followers set requirements for the sale of English and believe that it did not exist before the 18th century. Their sole focus on humanistic and historical writing led to the story of a distorted paragraph, if not mistaken. This article begins to refine this view, which became widespread after 1866, by examining paragraphs from practical works such as printed books with books from the beginning of the English Renaissance until 1700. The diversity and quantity of documents, how to increase them by increased knowledge, the emergence of pressure and the emergence and expansion of middle-class English readers who yearn for books written in non-Latin styles that are easily accessible. If we look at paragraphs from technical books that were printed in 1490, we find paragraphs that give examples of properties that Bane defined almost 400 years later. The presence of paragraphs that were clearly defined and formulated throughout the English Renaissance and 17th century in various specialist books - works that were ignored by literary critics who followed the history of English - showed that these paragraphs were unique to English composition. This article discusses sample paragraphs from this first printed technical work in English and begins to expand the history of English paragraphs. Further study of the paragraphs of Middle English later in the incunabula of practical, liturgical, and historical works is likely to show the roots of the paragraphs in the composition of the English language and allow scientists to see how the creation of paragraphs helped English writers over 500-700 years to make them full text. .

2. Rearrange the following layout so that it is more pleasing. Write a memo that explains why you made changes:



3. In groups of two, create a design for the following text; which recommends that a student purchases a particular sound board. Your instructor will require each group to use one of the various design strategies discussed in this unit. Be prepared to present an oral report explaining your format decisions.

This is a recommendation on whether to purchase a Goober sound board or a Deco sound board for the Technical Services Crew at the Student Center. Over the past few years, we have rented a soundboard when bands or the other large speaking groups come to the Students Center. The rental costs run from $200 to $500, and now that money has been allocated to buy a soundboard, we should seriously consider purchasing one. The use we will get out of the board will make it pay for itself in two or three years. This memo will detail my recommendation as to which board to purchase.

I recommend we purchase the Goober X5-•000 24-channel sound board: Greg Newman, the Tech Crew Chief, and I have Compared the Goober XS-2000 to the Deco TXS-260 24-channel board in audio Magazines and by talking to the people who have used the Goober Board and the Deco board. We found the Goober to be an overall better board. We have also experienced using both boards on many occasions and have liked the Goober Board better. We compared the boards in terms of these criteria: features, reliability/experience, and cost.

The first criterion of it is the features. This is the most important factor in deciding which sound board has to be purchased. We are looking for a sound board that provides 24 channels in and 8 lines out. The lines out are used for sound effects and equalization. The more "outs" you have, the better the sound will be. This is what the Goober XS-2000 has: 24 channels in and 8 lines out. The Deco TXS-260 has 24 channels in and only 6 lines out. We find it necessary to have 8 lines out because we want to offer bands the best-quality sound possible.

Reliability is another important factor. Goober and Deco are both reputable companies that make good soundboards, but when it comes down to operating at maximum efficiency, we feel the Goober Board can offer better reliability. I had the opportunity to speak with Will Hodges of Southern Thunder Sound, a sound rental company from which we have rented sound boards. He said that most bands that come in to rent hi-, equipment rent the Goober Boards because they are easier to work with and don't break down

as often as the Deco Boards. Mr Hodges's opinion lends further credibility to my recommendation that we purchase the Goober Board.

Greg and I have had experience working with both boards. Once when we rented a Deco Board, a loud buzzing sound began to be emitted from the speakers halfway through the concert. We did everything we could, but the buzzing continued throughout the Concert. On the occasions when have worked with a Goober Board, it has operated without any problem.

The cost is the last criterion that has allocated an amount of $3500 to purchase a sound board. The Deco TXS-260 is $2800 with a two-year limited warranty. The Goober XS-2000 is $3600 with a five-year limited warranty. We have dealt with this Goober dealer before, and she said that she would throw in a 100 foot-channel snake ('$700 value) free and would be 300 off the total price-$4300 value for $3300; with $1000 saving. Although the Deco Board is less expensive, we should spend the extra $500 for better board with a longer warranty, greater reliability and a free100-foot-snake.

4. Analyze two webpages in order to explain to a beginner audience how to lay one out-where to place titles, how large to make them, etc. To give your advice a range of examples, use a homepage/index and an information link by lowing a particular path through several links, e.g., About Us/Our Products: Cameras/FX20 MicroZoom/Technical Spec

5. Analyze the color scheme on a website. Use a major corporation like AT & T or 5. Sun Micro. Write a memo to your classmates that explains how the site uses color to make its message clear.

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Unit–7

VISUAL AIDS

Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

Reviewer: Dr Rashida Imran

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INTRODUCTION

As Unit 6 is related with page designing, for which visual features are vital ones. Though they have been discussed there yet for a detailed description of only visual aids, unit 7 is specified. This unit will explain you further the efficient use of visual aids in technical writing and in its presentation also. Here the question arises why visual aids are important in technical writing. The simple answer is that they play a vital role in clarifying, explaining, or supporting a verbal expression. Consequently, they help motivating the target audience to concentrate on the content and message of the technical writer or speaker. But to do so effectively a set of multiple skills is needed, which covers three basic areas in this regard. First of all is comprehension of the basic implications of the visual aids as well as selection and utilization of the most common type of visual aids used for the presentation. Second is the utilization of the visual aids with all of the delicacies of graphical representation. This feature mostly takes shape of drawing pie charts, line graphs, bar graphs, area graphs, etc.; and the third one is to develop referencing of books, videos, and webs. The last one is elaborated further through the concepts of referencing of films and video recordings of films, web-streaming videos as well as that of Television and Radio programmes-single episode in a series. Hence, this unit is covering all the technical aspects of using visual aids proficiently for the skilful technical communication.

OBJECTIVES

After completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Comprehend the basic implications of the visual aids;
2. Select and utilize the most common type of visual aids used for the presentation;
3. Learn the delicacies of graphical representation;
4. Draw pie charts, line graphs, bar graphs, area graphs, etc.; and
5. Develop referencing of books, videos, and webs.

7.1 USING VISUAL AIDS

Using visual aids is a great skill which highlights the message of the written content a thousand folds. That is why someone said that a single picture is worth a thousand words. Visual aids fall into two main categories—images and informational graphics. Images include photographs, illustrations and clip art, and video footage. Informational graphics include tables, charts, bar graphs, and line graphs. These visual aids serve two purposes: to add emotional impact to your presentation and to organize information more clearly. With that in mind, read to find out how specific types of visual aids achieve those purposes.

Figure 7.1: How to use visual aids effectively and creatively when giving a…/ Business Matters Magazine

The people who develop this skill unlock their potential and become successful in their respective professions. The reason is that we as human beings take more effective information visually, even at the time we are reading something because it is perceived through eyes and is stored in our mind as a visual thought. However, one should be careful that while designing visually, it may not overload the pages because it would create very poor reflection. In the other words, too much use of visuals will result making the audience confused, so it should be avoided and keep the things balanced. In this respect, the designer needs to understand how the human beings process the visual information, otherwise, it will be futile and wastage of energy and efforts. Before things are done, one should think back for a few

moments about human behavior psychology, and it also looked back and re-thought the way the people expect to receive and process information. This is a very important point to be noted that visuals are designed for different purposes according to the objectives, purposes, and the role of a person. In this concern, different things are to be kept in mind when the visuals are to be used for a magazine than the visuals for a newspaper or a book. Similarly, when we are playing the role of a trainer or that of a teacher, different things are required to be done. In this respect, a few rules which are common can be recollected for kinaesthetic type of people, auditory type of people and visual type of people, for example:

Kinaesthetic people like:

- Hands-on activities,
- Question and objection time,
- Small quizzes done in pairs,
- To be busy,
- To feel your enthusiasm,
- Audience participation
- To touch things.

Auditory People Like

- A varied and well-modulated voice,
- Statistics and facts,
- Detailed descriptions,
- Clear loud voice,
- Calm and organized talk,
- To listen to your enthusiasm and
- To talk out loud so that they can process what you say.

Visual People Like

- Overhead, slides, pictures, graphs,
- Videotapes,
- Demonstrations,
- Broad overviews stated,
- To see your enthusiasm,
- Gestures,
- Stories and examples that create a picture and
- To see materials ahead of time.

Let us now talk about the most common types of visual aids equipment available for a teacher or a trainer to use; these include:

- Blackboard,
- Marker Board,
- Overhead Projector,

- Slide Projector,
- LCD Projector,
- VCR and videotape,
- Pictures and
- Charts.

Now it depends upon the user, which type of media he/she intends to use, it is totally up to the user and however, there are a few common rules for developing the visual aids:

1. Readable and consistent fonts should be used while the user should stay away from the fancy stuff.
2. One or two major points per visual aid should be noted, and one should limit the use of sub-points text to a few phrases per subject.
3. A simple method that is easy to use and better to comprehend should be employed.
4. A control number should always be added and a title to each visual aid should be given, where possible. This will help the trainer keep his presentation organized and in a proper sequence as well.
5. For visual methods decided to be used, the instructor should be clear about its limitations.

7.1.1 Significance of Using Audio Visual Aids

Most of the studies claim that audio-visual aids or AV Aids serve very positive purposes and make the teaching more effective and successful. But the condition is that they should be used properly otherwise the required results cannot be achieved. Let us see the significance of AV Aids according to the following findings of Monash University Library:

1. Audio-visual aids used in the classroom can stimulate interest in the students. The learners give passionate attention to the lecture which will ultimately develop a strong linking with the subject.
2. They are helpful in attitude formation, which further can assist the learning of the students.
3. These aids bring past into the present and have the potential to cover the record of the years even that of centuries in a very short period of time.
4. They have the power to help in making the entire world a real audience of different happenings occurring in different parts of the world.
5. These aids discontinue the tedium of school routine and are always saluted by the students as a healthy change in the classroom.
6. The class always gives a better response, when these aids are employed.
7. Audio-visual aids provide an impetus to the students for making better use of textbooks rather than just being contingent on guides.

8. Audio-visual aids make teaching substance dynamic and interesting.
9. They help students to perceive things in their most natural setting.
10. They are time-saving.
11. Audio-visual aids assist to make a clear understanding by helping students to visualize things visibly understood with the help of visual aids only.
12. They also serve as the best entertainment during the learning process.
13. Audio-visual aids also support the development of meanings and henceforth to vocabulary expansion.
14. They substantiate the precise thinking by equipping some of the basic raw material for thought which may prove as the warehouse of recollection with nonverbal involvement.
15. They are used to give new experiences and help to correct wrong impersonations.
16. Due to their concrete expressions, they help in the retention of complex events and ideas.

7.2 GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING VISUALS FOR EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

Most importantly, the teachers teach with the help of audio-visual aids to make their talk more interesting and effectively motivating. For this purpose, their visual presentation, no doubt, emphasizes the most important ideas of their oral presentation. That is why, the emphasis is given to use aids in order to reinforce, clarify, illustrate or highlight their individual points because the ultimate purpose of the visuals is not to prepare the talk of the presenter but to illustrate the presentation.

Figure 7.2: Mind-blowing PowerPoint-Creating Effective Visual Presentations/YouTube

In the other words, the purpose of the presenter is not to compete with what he/she is saying rather to add up the interest and motivation. Therefore, the following key points should be kept in mind while preparing the presentation:

- Keep statements simple and to the point, using keywords and phrases.
- There should be a focus on one idea otherwise three or more ideas in a single visual may detract and confuse the reader.
- Do not repeat the text of your presentation word-for-word on the visual.
- Pick and present only key points to support your statements. Avoid using all the statistics.
- Use a variety of layouts as you know that retention of information is better taken with pictures or charts than words.
- Audience size should be considered carefully and visuals must be prepared properly and accordingly.

7.2.1 General Guidelines for Using Visual Aids

- Keep your visuals simple.
- Keep your audience in mind while designing the visuals.
- Proofreading is important and should be done very carefully.
- Fonts should be clear and easy to read.
- Colored fonts should have a dark background.
- Avoid using shades of the background color for titles or details.
- Avoid commercial endorsements.
- Test your presentation ahead of time.

7.3 VISUAL AIDS WITH GRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Visual guides assume a significant job in the learning procedure. They can keep a group of spectators drew in, come to your meaningful conclusion, simple for them to get it. The utilization of visual guides, combined with great open talking abilities, work connectedly at the hip to make powerful introductions. The basic saying is that an image recounts to a thousand stories and encourages what you need to express. Words and pictures introduced in various arrangements can bid straightforwardly to your group of spectators' creative minds, adding capacity to your expressed words. The utilization of visual guides will move you further along toward your destinations by showing and underlining your thoughts more adequately than words alone. Visual guides embellish the introductions - they can help the group of spectators' comprehension of the exercise, clear focuses, make an impact, and make excitement. It has turned out to be progressively essential to make data visual:

"Something is going on. We are turning into an outwardly intervened society. For some, comprehension of the world is being practiced, not through words, yet by perusing pictures". (Whose quotation is this, no reference is given)

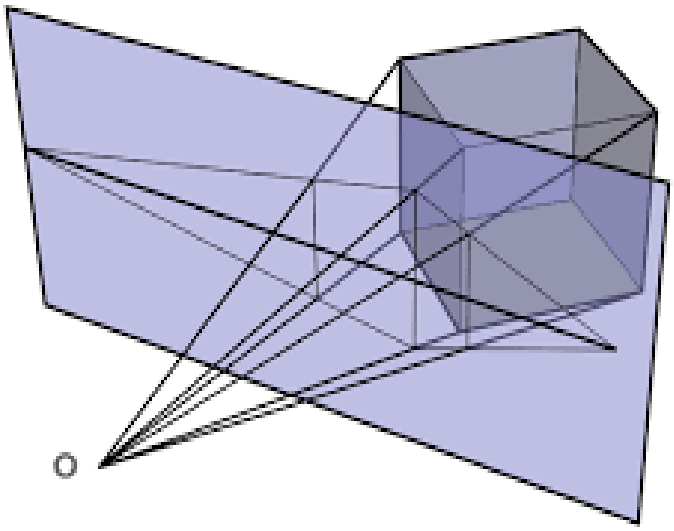


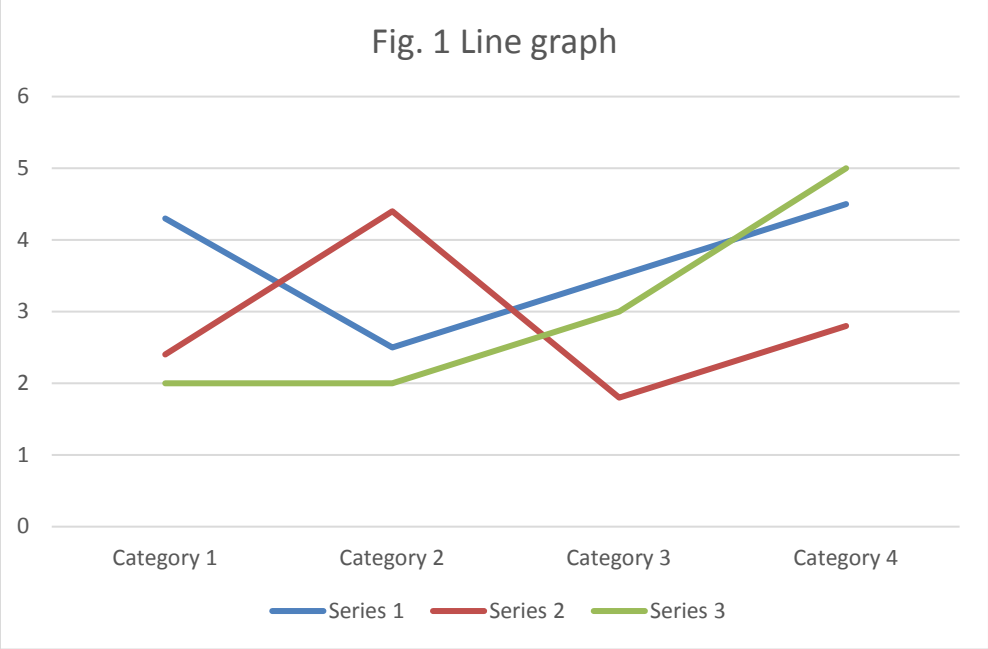
Figure 7.3: Perspective (graphical)/ Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopaedias

Visual guides include your group of spectators and require a change starting with one action then onto the next: from hearing to seeing. When you utilize visual guides, their utilization will, in general, empower motions and development on your part. Clear pictures duplicate the group of spectators' degree of comprehension of the material exhibited, and they ought to be utilized to strengthen your message, explain focuses, and make energy. The utilization of visual guides, at that point, is commonly valuable to the group of spectators and to you also. In numerous investigations, test clinicians and instructors have discovered that maintenance of data three days after a gathering or other occasion is multiple times more noteworthy, when data is introduced by visual and oral methods than when the data is exhibited by the verbally expressed word alone. With pictures, the ideas or thoughts you present are never again basically words - however words should be there in addition to pictures. The outline below refers to the adequacy of visual guides on the crowd maintenance. The instructive analysts recommend that around 83% of human learning happens outwardly and the staying 17% do through different faculties - 11% through hearing, 3.5% through smell, 1% through taste, and 1.5% through touch.

7.3.1 Line Graph

Line Diagrams are utilized to show quantitative qualities over a consistent interim or timeframe. A-Line Diagram is most every now and then used to show drifts and break down how the information has changed after some time. Line Charts are drawn by first plotting information that focuses on a Cartesian organize framework, at that point associating a line between these focuses. Regularly, the Y-hub has a quantitative worth, while the X-hub is a timescale or a grouping of interims. Negative qualities can be shown underneath the x-hub. The heading of the lines on the diagram fills in as a pleasant allegory for the information: An upward slant shows where esteems have expanded and a descending slant demonstrates where esteems have diminished. The line's adventure over the diagram can make designs that uncover inclines in a dataset. At the point when gathered with different lines (the other information arrangements), singular lines can be contrasted with each other. Nonetheless, abstain from utilizing more than 3-4 lines for every diagram, as this makes the outline increasingly jumbled and harder to peruse. An answer for this is to make partition of the diagram into littler products (have a little Line Chart for every datum arrangement). Line charts are utilized to track changes over short and extensive stretches of time. At the point when little changes exist, line charts are smarter to use than structured presentations. Line charts can likewise be utilized to look at changes over a similar timeframe for more than one gathering.

Graph 7.1: A Line Graph



7.3.2 A Pie Chart

Pie outlines are ideal to utilize when you are attempting to analyze portions of an entirety. They do not show changes after some time.

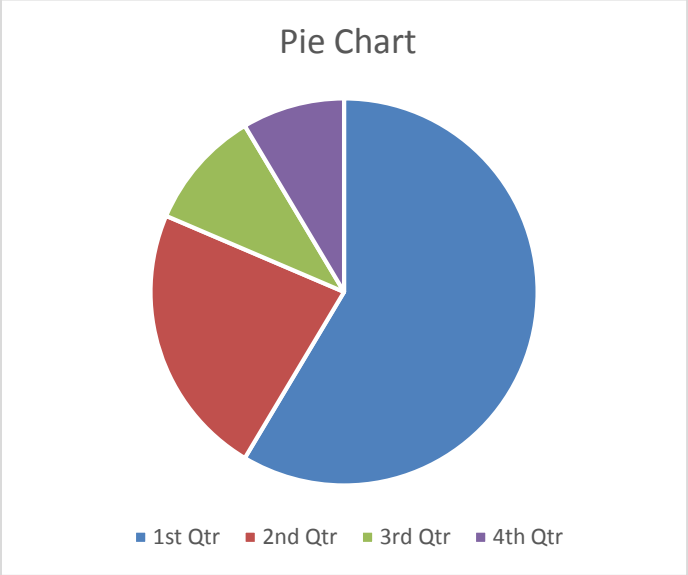
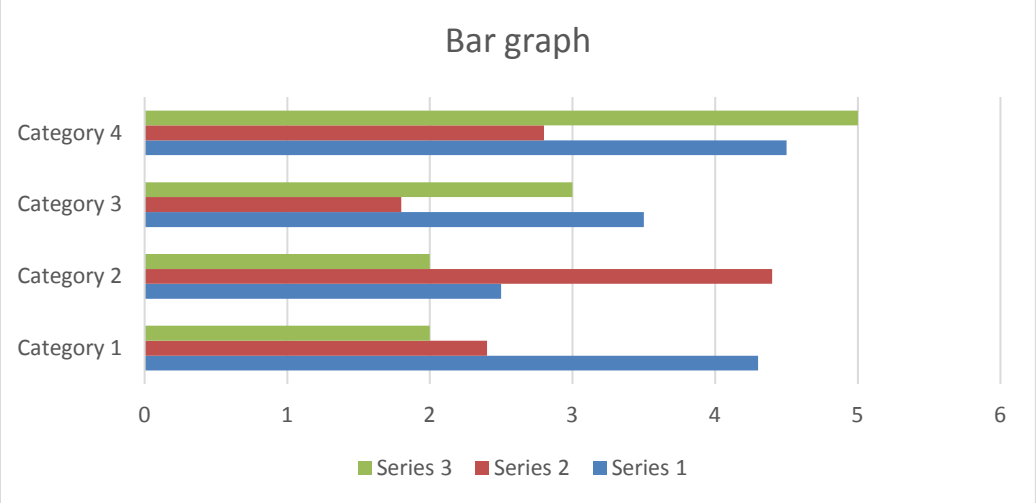


Figure 7.4: A Pie Chart

7.3.3 A Bar Graph

Bar graphs are utilized to contrast things between various gatherings or with track changes after some time. Be that as it may be, when attempting to quantify change after some time, reference diagrams are best, when the progressions are bigger.

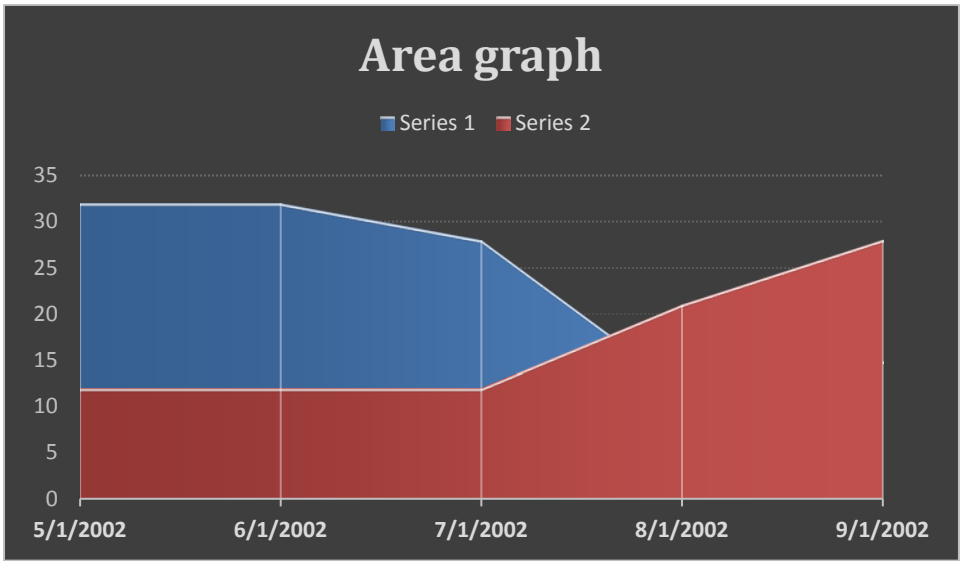
Graph 7.2: A Bar Graph



7.3.4 An Area Graph

Area charts are fundamentally the same as the line diagrams. They can be utilized to track changes after some time for at least one gathering. Zone diagrams are great to be utilized, when you are following the adjustments in at least two related gatherings that make up one entire class (for instance open and private gatherings).

Graph 7.3: An Area Graph



7.4 TROUBLESHOOTING

Investigating is a type of critical thinking, regularly connected to fix bombed items or procedures on a machine or a framework.

Figure 7.5: Windows7: Troubleshoot/Lynda.com

It is a sensible, efficient quest for the wellspring of an issue so as to tackle it and make the item or procedure operational once more. Investigating is expected to recognize the side effects as well. Deciding the in all likelihood cause is a procedure of end—disposing of potential reasons for an issue. At last, investigating requires affirmation that the arrangement re-establishes the item or procedure to its working state. All in all, investigating is the distinguishing proof or finding of "inconvenience" in the administration stream of a framework brought about by a disappointment or the like. The issue is at first depicted as indications of a breakdown, and investigating is the way toward deciding and helping the reasons for these side effects.

A framework can be portrayed as far as it is normal, wanted, or expected conduct (as a rule, for counterfeit frameworks, its motivation). Occasions or contributions to the framework are relied upon to create explicit outcomes or yields. (For instance, choosing the "print" choice from different PC applications is planned to bring about a hard copy emerging from some particular gadget). Any surprising or unwanted conduct is a side effect. Investigating is the way toward disconnecting the particular reason or reasons for the indication. Much of the time the side effect is a disappointment of the item or procedure to create any outcomes. (Nothing was printed, for instance). The restorative move would then be able to be made to avert further disappointments of a comparative kind.

7.5 LAYOUT

Page formatting, the course of action of visual components on a page, comprehensive format (comp.), a proposed page formatting are exhibited by an architect to the customer as in the following:

- Layout (figuring), the way toward computing the situation of articles in space.

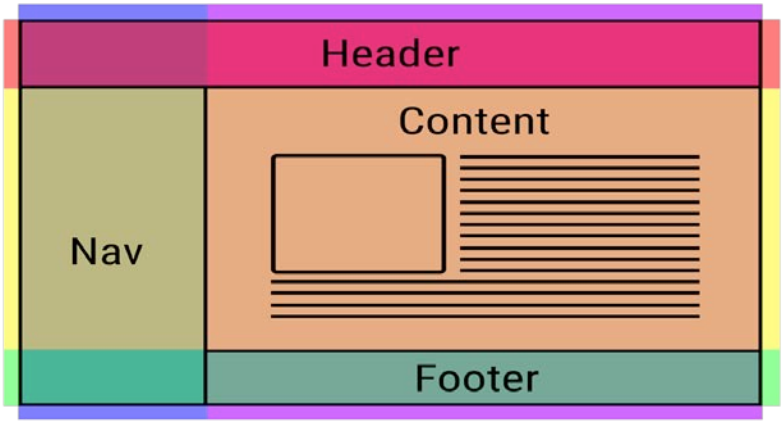


Figure 7.6: Simple Web Layout with CSS Grid

- Layout motor, another name for the internet browser motor, the center programming that showcases content in an internet browser.
- Automobile format, a portrayal of the areas of the motor and drive wheels on a vehicle.
- Integrated circuit format, the portrayal of an incorporated circuit in geometric shapes.
- Keyboard format, a plan of the keys on a typographic console.
- Model railroad format, a diorama with tracks for working downsized trains.
- The layout or checking out, the exchange of a plan onto a work piece in assembling.
- Plant design study, a building concentrates to investigate physical arrangements for an assembling plant.
- Layout, a particular rendition of the parts, a situation where the legs are reached out in inverse ways.
- Layout, a particular rendition of a Running Catch and Slide in (Extreme Frisbee) where the player is at running rate and endeavors to get the circle ("frisbee)" just past one's running reach while remaining at full speed, broadening two passes out in front to get the plate and seizing it with one hand, with the chest and lower arms parallel to the ground and legs stretched out back behind; regularly pursued by hitting the ground hands first, sliding up onto one's lower arms, trailed by the chest hitting the ground and proceeding with the slide, making a point to keep hold of the plate.
- Process design, a story plan of a plant that organizes hardware as indicated by its capacity.
- Product design, a story plan of a plant in which work stations and hardware are requested.

7.6 REFERENCING

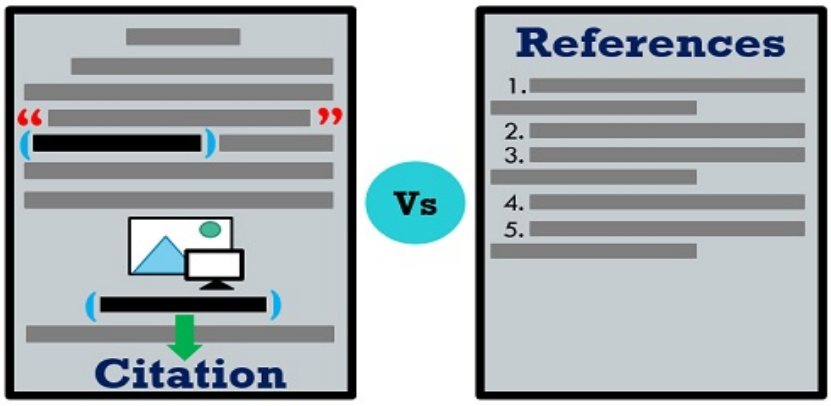


Figure 7.7: Difference between Citation and Reference (with Comparison Chart…/ Key Differences

7.6.1 Referencing of Films and Video Recordings of Films

Format: Producer, A. A. (Role in the production) & Writer, B. B. (Role in the production). (Year of release). *Title of film* [Format]. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Example: M. (Producer) & Lonergan, K. (Writer/Director). (2000). *You can count on me* [Motion Picture]. Hollywood, CA: Paramount Pictures.

Note: Place of publication = Location of Film Studio. Publisher = Name of Film Studio.

7.6.2 Referencing for DVDs and Video Recordings

Format: Producer, A. A. (Role in the production). (Year of release). *Title of film* [Format]. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Example: Psychological Association. (Producer). (2000). *Responding therapeutically to patient expressions of sexual attraction* [DVD]. Washington, DC: Author.

Video File (For example, YouTube Video)

Format: Author, A. A. (Year, date of posting). *Title of video* [Format]. Retrieved from 'website address'.

Example: Markapsolon. (2011, September 9). *Real ghost girl caught on Video Tape 14* [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nyGCbxD848

7.6.3 Web-streaming Video

Format: A. (Year of posting). *Title of video* [Format]. Place of publication: Publisher. Retrieved from 'database name'.

Example: Fukuyama, M. (2006). *At the corner of me and myself: Voices of multiple social identities* [Streaming Video]. Hanover, MA: Microtraining Associates. Retrieved from Alexander Street Press database.

7.6.4 Television and Radio Programmes - Single Episode in a Series

Format: Author, A. A. (Role in production). (Year of release). Title of episode [Format]. In A. Author Rrole in production), *Title of series.* Place of publication: Publisher.

Example: Thomason, M., Rudd, P., & Fineri, W. (Writers/Directors). (2007). North West Passage [Television series episode]. In T. Wright (Supervising Producer), *Captain Cook: Obsession and discovery*. Melbourne: Film Australia.

7.6.5 Map or Chart – electronic

Format: Author, A. A. (Year of publication). Title of the map or chart [Format]. Retrieved from 'web address'.

Example: Department of Commerce. (2010). Idaho Rivers [Map], Retrieved from http://www.visitidaho.org/mapsimages/maps.aspx

7.6.6 Visual Aid Checklist

- Visual aids are clearly incorporated with the content of the presentation
- Photographs and diagrams match the general tone of the presentation
- Images and text are big and clear enough for the viewer to see or read
- Images and graphics are shown with descriptive text or a legend
- Informational graphics include clear, easy-to-read labels. captions and headings
- Text within informational graphics is legible
- Formatting choices are clear in color presentations
- Any text within graphics is free of errors and mistakes
- Hyperlinks within slides function accurately
- Display text for hyperlinks is succinct and informative

Exercises

1. Collect data from the class on any research topic, such as type of major, year in school, years with the company or population of hometown or birthplace. Now create two visual aids: a bar graph and a pie chart. Make them as neat and complete as possible, including captions. Write a brief report that states a conclusion you can read by looking at the visual or that tells an audience what to notice in the visual.

2. Get an access to a computer graphics program, make three different graphs of the data.

3. Divide the class into groups numbered 1–3. Have individuals in each section convert the numbers in either of the following paragraphs into visual aids. Section 1 should make a line graph, section 2 a bar graph, and section 3 a pie chart. Have one person from each section put that group's visual on the board. Discuss their effectiveness.

4. Revise the unit carefully. Locate at least two visual aids from reputable sources that you can use. Prepare them for your presentation by adding clarifying text as needed. Be sure to cite the source.

5. Incorporate the visual aids into your presentation. This may involve preparing physical copies for display or inserting graphic files into an electronic presentation.

6. Take some time now to revise how you will integrate the visual and verbal components of your presentation.

7. You can use any presentation software, refine your slides. Make sure the visual approach is consistent and matches your topic. If you are not using presentation software, review the annotated outline you created in previously. Update it as needed to reflect your current plan. Also, determine how you will physically set up your visual aids.

8. Analyse all sources carefully and record information. When you look for visual media to complement your presentation, you are conducting research. Apply the same standards you used for your research paper. Choose reliable sources, such as reputable news organizations, government and non-profit organizations, and educational institutions. Verify data in additional sources. Finally, be sure to document all source information as you proceed.

9. Write a memo or an IMRD to your classmates in which you analyze the use of visual aids in websites. Your goal is to give hints on how to incorporate visuals effectively into their Web documents. Do the visual aids exemplify one of the four uses of visual aids explained in this unit? Explain why the visual aid is effective in the Web document.

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Unit–8

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

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INTRODUCTION

Unit 8, like all the previous units, is very important one. Units 6 and 7 were sequential development for making you, Dear Students, skilful and proficient enough to deal in with the current requirements of technical communication, especially in making effective presentations aided with visual features. But these units were mainly concentrated on the written preparation of technical writing and its presentation. In the same sequence, now unit 8 is focusing on oral presentations of these well-prepared technical presentations. To put it in other words, this unit is letting you know about all the technical requirements of powerful oral presentations, which is an important aspect of technical communication. Hence, this unit will let you comprehend the central concept of professional communication. For this purpose, it will explain how to analyze the target audience and availability of the required material for oral communication through proper planning as well as documenting the communication before participating or presenting the information. It also needs for a technical communicator to verify the target audience through their improved knowledge of handling a variety of audiences in different situations. This unit, therefore, has a great deal of significance as far as making of effectual oral technical presentations are concerned. To make them more up to mark, at the end of unit, two sections are added on globalization and oral presentations, and qualities of a good communicator respectively. Out of these two last sections, the former one will let you know all the necessary requirements to present yourself orally anywhere all over the world. But the later and the last section is a practical application of all the knowledge about the professional technical communication.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

1. Understand the fundamental concept of professional communication;
2. Analyze the target audience and availability of the required material for oral communication;
3. Improve their knowledge of handling a variety of audiences in different situations;
4. Document the communication before participating or presenting the information;
5. Plan their presentation
6. Determine their audience.

8.1 INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Professional communication needs careful attention on the part of communicator to pass through certain important phases including preparation, collection of the required information, making rehearsal which can make him/her an effective professional communicator otherwise communication will be a futile activity. In this respect, the communicator should know about the components of communication first. The term professional communication refers to the various forms of speaking, listening, writing, and responding, carried out both in and beyond the workplace, whether in person or electronically. From meetings and presentations to memos and emails to marketing materials and annual reports, in business communication, it is essential to take a professional, formal, civil tone to make the best impression on your audience.

8.2 COMPONENTS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication in an organization is considered as the lifeblood without which an organization cannot run successfully. This is the reason; every organization prefers to induct the employees who are good communicators. A good communicator knows well about the components of communication. For instance:

- Context
- Reader/listener
- Message
- Medium
- Receiver
- Feedback

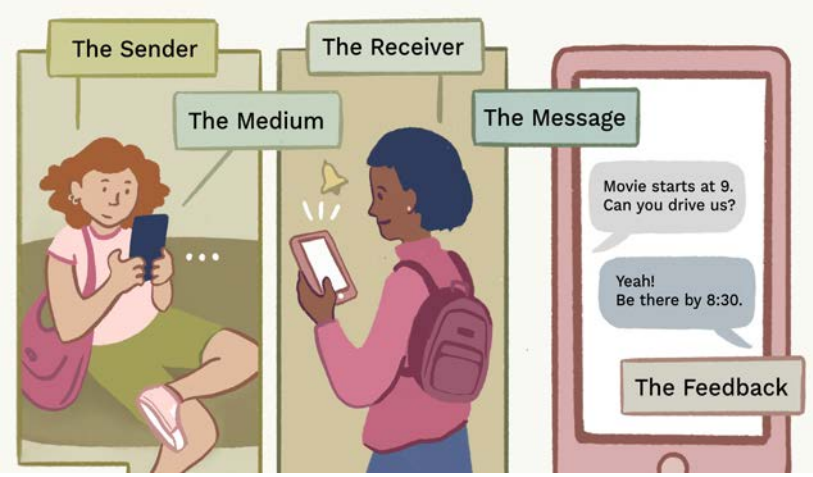


Figure 8.1: The Basic Elements of the Communication Process/Thought

8.3 PLANNING THE PRESENTATION

Presentation is the expression of knowledge, themes, facts, experiences, and observations in front of a particular audience. The purpose of the presentation may also vary. Sometimes the purpose of the presentation is to motivate others, sometimes to convince them on certain points, sometimes, it is ideological. In this scenario of the various reasons, types of audience, and purposes, the presenter has to have a lot of work. Most key work is to plan his/her presentation. For planning the presentation, the presenter has to collect the required information using different sources. Without planning, the presentation cannot win the favor of the audience and cannot be successful.

Figure 8.2: Effective PowerPoint Presentations/Slide Share

8.3.1 Plan for your Audience

Planning includes decisions about audience, situation, organizational pattern, and presentation. It is important to analyze our audience prior to our speech so that we can create a link between the speaker and the audience during the speech or in any type of communication. We should step inside the minds of the audience to understand the world from their perspective. Through this process, we can find common ground with the audience, which allows us to align our message with the audience. Nowadays presentations and oral reports are a very common and the most popular mode of communication, and due to the popularity of the oral report, many

listeners have been subjected to the peculiar kind of presentation many times. Indeed, the use of PowerPoint is so common that most oral reports are simply called "PowerPoints" or "Power-Point Reports". Therefore, an audience may often anticipate that any presentation is likely to be another monotonous or good-for-nothing work (Miller; Tufte, 23). The key to preventing the audience apathy or even a downright hostility is to focus on your audience, not on the technology of your presentation. The central goal for your presentation is, simply, to be relevant. One speech expert says, "People will pay close attention to something they perceive as having relevance to their own lives and concerns" (Bacall, 2003. In order to remain aligned to your audience, consider differences between listeners and readers, and ask the same audience analysis questions that you ask in report writing. It is said that the presenters should adopt the audience-oriented approach in the presentation. This is done by understanding the audience. For example, if the audience is receptive, then things or facts can be expressed overtly even negative expressions cannot cost the presenters. On the other side, if the audience is traditional-minded, then the presenter should be very careful in the selection of vocabulary and explanation of ideas or ideology. Similarly, in some cultures, certain things are not communicated with a specific gender. In this case, the presenter should understand the psyche of the people of that culture and he should also understand the audience's gender. Similarly, there are certain things related to the firm belief of the audience, the presenter should be careful while talking on such issues. Thus, the presenter should plan his/her audience before his/her presentation to convey the message successfully.

8.3.2 Presenting to a Listening Audience

A motivated listener is not present in all the presenting situations. Sometimes, very few listeners are attentively listening to the speakers. If it is so, then the speaker has to add up different presentation stuff in the speech to keep the listeners alive. However, if the listeners are self-motivated and enthusiastic to listen to the talk of the presenter, then the presenter with sufficiently required material and information can handle them effectively. In the other words, the presenter has to collect the needed information which should work for the situation. He/she should be aware of the requirement of the listeners, their background, their likes, dislikes, and their preferences as well. Prepared with this intent, the presenter may win the favor of the audience and can be a successful presenter. Similarly, there are some informal situations when the presentation is not very much formal, and the listeners are the employees and colleagues. In this situation, the presenter is already aware of certain things; it is better to keep the presentations brief and to the point instead of repeating the talk often communicated with the same audience. It should be made different from the previous presentations and there should be something new for the audience.

8.3.3 Speakers Use Personal Contact

Speakers use different strategies to communicate with the intended audience. To make their communication successful and to win the favor of the audience, they use personal contact. In the other words, they bring their logical relationship with the audience. Sometimes, they use ethnic relationship in their speeches. On the other time, they use cast and religious relationships with the audience in an unnoticed way to convey their message effectively. The purpose of using personal contact is mainly to break the communication barriers or hindrances among the communicators. The other purpose of using this strategy is to create likeliness feelings in the minds of listeners. However, in educated circles with moral beliefs, these strategies are not given preference and are taken as negative strategies. Besides, it is the more appreciated phenomenon to use 'you attitude', 'effective information' and the required knowledge to satiate the audience by fulfilling their psychological needs as well.

8.3.4 Listeners are Present for the Entire Presentation

Listeners are often present for the entire presentation. In this case, the presenters should take care of the time and interest of the listeners. It happens mostly in routine situations or on certain national and international functions which are celebrated in the educational and business organizations. The audience is invited, and they have to sit until the end of the function. In this situation, sometimes, the presenters do not take care of the time and create boredom in their presentations. They are not prepared well, that's why they have to spend more time to get the focus of the topic of presentation. There is nothing new in their presentations. So, presenters should be audience-oriented and be careful about their willingness and interests.

(i) Ask Audience Analysis Questions

In speeches, the audience analysis questions are the same as for reports or for the other documents. Ask these questions (based on Laskowski 2001):

- Who are they?
- How many will be present?
- What is their knowledge level?
- What task will your presentation help them complete?
- What do they need?
- Why are they there?

Consider how you would give a speech on your new data analysis software to these two audiences: three experienced managers seated around a conference table, waiting to decide whether to place an order with you; and 50 sales reps. seated in a lecture hall, eager to familiarize themselves with the product prior to making sales

calls. Obviously, these situations would require two very different presentations. The answers to the audience analysis questions, then, will help you develop a presentation that keeps your audience attentive to your points so that they walk away with the feeling that their time with you has been well spent and productive.

8.3.5 Plan for the Situation

Presentations are made in many venues, from small rooms in which people sit around a conference table to large auditoriums packed with conference attendees. Spend time investigating the physical layout of the room. Follow these guidelines (based on part in Jacobs 2003):

- Determine the size of the room and where you will stand in relation to the audience; the screen, and the computer controls.
- Determine the location of the electrical outlets and the electrical cords on the floor.
- Learn how sound carries in the room. Will you have to use a microphone? If so, do you know how to adjust it so that your voice carries well without ringing or buzzing?
- Determine whether you will have to bring a disk to use in a computer already present in the room, or whether you need to bring your laptop.

If you have to bring your own laptop, determine how to hook it up to the overhead projector system located in the room.

8.3.6 Plan your Organizational Pattern

The organizational pattern that you choose depends on the needs of your audience and the actual content of the material. Common organizational patterns are problem-solution, goal-methods-results-discussion, narrative (Shaw, Brown, and Bromiley, Year?), as well as the traditional approach of introduction, body, and conclusion (Tracy, 2003).

The narrative approach, advocated by Shaw, Brown, and Bromiley, (Year?) has three stages: Set the stage, introduce the dramatic conflict, resolve the conflict. To set the stage, the speaker defines the current situation by analyzing factors that affect the situation—market forces, forces that affect change, company objectives, and strengths. To introduce dramatic conflict, the speaker explains the challenges that are faced by the company in the current situation. What are the obstacles (the bad guys) in this situation: Poorly functioning technology, new competitor and Market share losses? To resolve the conflict, the speaker must show how the audience can overcome the obstacles to win—this change will cause the technology to function correctly. This strategy will offset the new competitor's appeal. This strategy-will induce consumers to purchase again.

Shaw, Brown, and Bromiley feel that the story method is very effective, especially in contrast to the "bullet-point" presentations. The Bullet-point presentations have two problems: first, listeners tend to remember only the first and the last items in a list; and second, listeners are unable to clarify the relationships of the items in a list. For instance, items in a list can have only three relationships: Sequence (this point follows that point); priority (from most to the least important or vice versa) and membership (all these items are the same kind of thing). Missing is the ability of the listeners to easily understand critical relationships such as to cause or contrast.

The story structure "defines relationships, a sequence of events, cause and effect, and a priority among items—and those items are likely to be remembered as a complex whole" (P.4). As a result, the act of writing the speech will cause the speaker to think clearly about the complexity of the ideas, and so give the listeners access to the speaker's thought process. The upshot will be listeners who grasp the significance of the main point because they have been engaged by the story that expounds it.

8.3.7 Plan your Presentation

To plan the presentation, determine your relationship to the slides; create a story-board, and finally the series of slides.

(i) Determine your Relationship to the Slides:

A presentation consists of two things—your voice and personal presence, and the information on the slides—and you need to determine their relationship. Because the slide can contain only a small amount of information, it is not the main source of information in the speech—rather you are. However, if you do not control the relationship, the slides can easily take over, basically drawing all the audience's attention away from you and the points you have to make. To do so, use the advice of many experienced speakers; deliver quality content to the audience (Bocall; Stratten; Tufte, Year? 22). In order to deliver quality, decide which combination of information from you and information from the slide will best convey the information to the audience. It is helpful to see the slide in either "the foreground" or "the background". If it is in the foreground, it provides information, either visual aid or text, that you explain. Project a visual in order to explain it. For instance, if you have a table of sales made during a quarter, you might show the table with its columns of numbers, and then point out items in the table and explain the relationship that is important to the audience. If you practice with the program, you will even be able to highlight the items that you wish to interrelate. Project the text in order to emphasize the content. If, for instance, you want the audience to remember a certain point, you can project just that point on the screen and then discuss it.

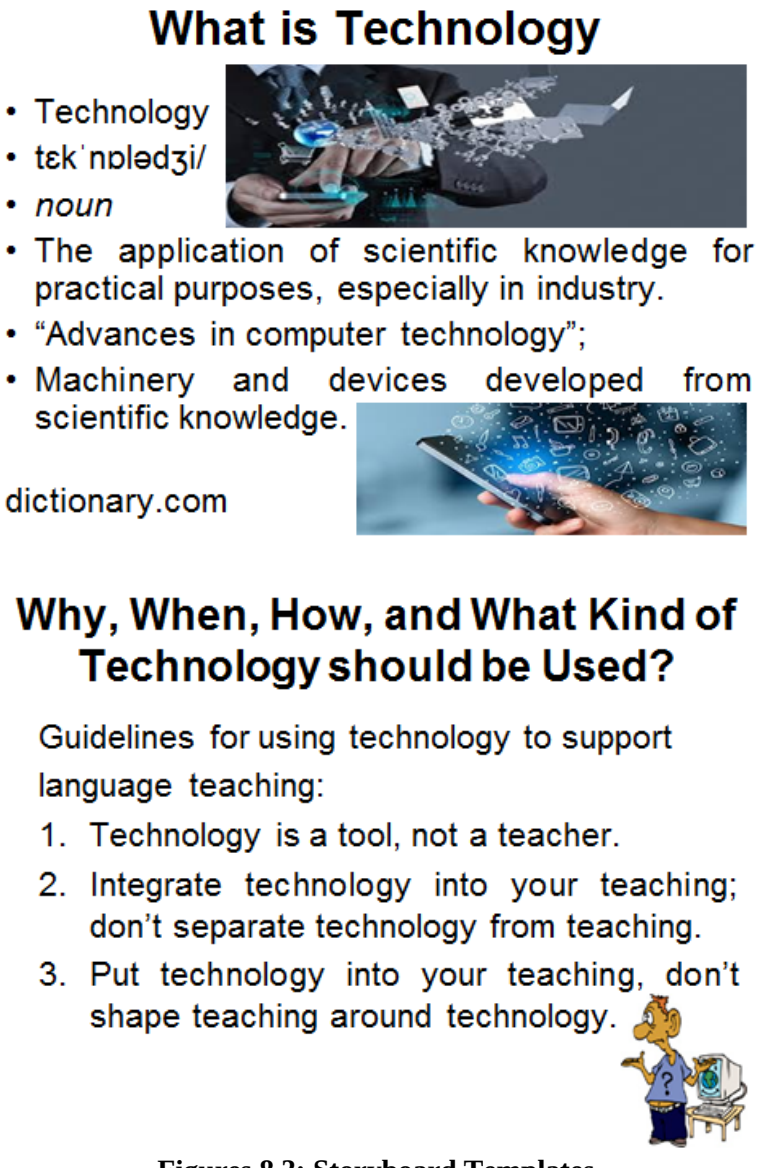
With foreground material, then; you speak to the slide. The idea is that you will explain in some detail the implication of what the audience sees on screen, the combination of the visual and your explanation is the point to get. For instance, Figure 18.1 illustrates the credentials of two researchers. The speaker projected the slide and then spoke for several minutes explaining, in turn, the various achievements of each researcher. The point of the slide is to establish the credibility of the researchers, and the speaker filled in details and context about the credentials listed.

When a slide is in the background, you do not speak to it. Instead, it is present in order to summarize key points, either what is about to be covered or what has just been covered (Miller, G. Year?). At its best, this method helps the audience stay on track and follow and remember the points that have been made. If you have four sub-points to make about a topic, projecting them on a slide, then discussing each, in turn, will help the listeners follow along. Understanding this relation to your slides will help you create a presentation that delivers content to audiences effectively.

(a) Create a Storyboard

A storyboard is a text and graphics outline for your presentation. It is a graphic organizer which is usually in the form of images or illustrations and it is normally presented or otherwise displayed in a sequence and this is in order of what happened first to the last. They act as a good way of pre-visualizing a motion graphic, motion picture, interactive media as well as animations. It can be as simple as a two-column table or a three-column sequence of lines, boxes, and comments. Variations of storyboards also exist in presentation programs. PowerPoint, for instance, has an outline function and a slide sorter function that allow you to see the entire sequence of your presentation. Use storyboards as an integrated outline that shows both the sequence of the topics and the content of the slide or slides devoted to that topic (Korolenla 151-153;. Lindstrom 110; "Web", Year?). People use storyboard templates that are ready-made and all an individual will be required to do on them is to add visuals and the written materials to customize the storyboard templates and then convert them into their own storyboards. You can come across free storyboard templates and these are the ones that are available free of charge on many sites including this one. These also have empty spaces in the appropriate locations for the images as well as blank spaces where users can enter the content that will be relevant to their respective storyboards. The storyboard templates, as well as storyboard software, are mostly used by people, who do not have enough time to come up with their own storyboards frames. The storyboard templates are quite time-saving and they are quite cost-effective. These materials are easy to use

and they can be modified or customized to suit one's specific needs. In the following there are two examples of it:


What is Technology
• Technology
• tɛkˈnɒlədʒi/
• noun
• The application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes, especially in industry.
• "Advances in computer technology";
• Machinery and devices developed from scientific knowledge.
dictionary.com
Why, When, How, and What Kind of Technology should be Used?
Guidelines for using technology to support language teaching:
1. Technology is a tool, not a teacher.
2. Integrate technology into your teaching; don't separate technology from teaching.
3. Put technology into your teaching, don't shape teaching around technology.

Figures 8.3: Storyboard Templates

(b) Create the Slides or the Other Visual Aids

After you have the storyboard outline for your presentation, create the slides. A well-designed presentation will help convey your point pleasingly to an attentive audience. But, as Tufte, E. (Year?) points out, "If your words or images are not on

point, making them dance in color won't make them relevant" (P. 22). The following guidelines (based in part on Scoville; Tessler; Welsh, Year?) will help you create pleasing slides and sequences that help to convey information rather than to distract attention from the main points. As you create slides, understand, the parts of a slide, pay attention to helping your reader, and make effective use of fonts, colors, animations, sound effects, and slide transitions.

(c) Understand the Parts of a Slide

The parts of the slide are the title, the text or graphics, the border and the background.

- The title appears at the top, usually in the largest type size. Use it to explicitly identify the contents of the visual. A rule (1/2 or 1 point in size) separates the title from the text or graphic. The text makes the points you want to highlight. Use phrases that convey specific content rather than generic topics.
- The graphic consists of a table, chart, or drawing.
- The border is a line that provides a frame around the visual.
- The background is the color or design that appears behind the text or graphics.

(ii) Help the Reader

The most important part of any presentation is the content, but do not try to put all of your ideas on slides. Too much text will cause viewers to read slides, deflecting attention from you. Display the only text that the audience should read carefully. Follow these guidelines to design your slides:

- Use a landscape (horizontal) layout for your text rather than a portrait (vertical) layout. The landscape makes the long lines of text easier to read and
- Entitle each slide so your audience will have a quick reference to the topic at hand.

(iii) Visual Logic

Visual Logic is a graphical authoring tool which allows students to write and execute programs using different kinds of flowcharts. It is basically used in an academic setting to teach introductory programmes, notions and idea. If we want to create applications for our business, we need to create a flow chart for our applications that depicts the flow of the program that how the user can interact with it. Visual Logic is part of a every course package that teaches programmers and developers to write code using flow chart sequencing. Visual Logic allows us to create programming flow charts that are easy to follow and enable us to create code for our business applications in a sequence. Visual Logic also enables us to run simple programs without compiling them in higher-level languages.

(iv) Visual Aids

For visual aids (tables, graphs, pictures):

- Simplify the graph so that it makes only one point.
- Use graphs for dramatic effect. A line graph that plunges sharply at one point calls attention to the drop. Your job is to interpret it.
- Use tables for presenting numbers. Be prepared to point out the numbers you want the audience to take notice of it.

8.3.8 Collect the Information

Information collection is the dire need of every presenter. Successful presenters always give more time to the collection of information. Whether it is written communication or oral communication, the collection of information has vital importance. Those who do not collect information may find difficulty in conveying their messages.

8.3.9 Organize the Information

Information is collected from different sources including the general public, research journals, newspapers, magazines, internet, and libraries. It depends on what type of information is required after that the presenter may be able to collect the information from the desired location. Once the information is collected, it should be organized. In this manner, the most important information should be placed at the beginning which is mostly introductory. Then, the explanatory description is sequenced. Moreover, the supportive material is added up, and finally concluding information is organized. Without organization of the information, it is not possible to make the presentation clear and understandable. Thus, it should be the prime priority of the presenter to organize his/her message for successful communication.

8.3.10 Make Slides/Hand-Outs

The presentation can be presented in various ways. One is the traditional way of expression that advocates verbal talk only through language, gestures, and postures. However, with the passage of time, now new methods and techniques of presentations are introduced. In this respect, slides and hand-outs are strongly advised to be used. Slides offer understanding computer skills without which it is not possible to prepare slides. Every presentation needs a differing number of slides for presentation. Similarly, hand-outs are also used in presentations. These hand-outs consist of relevant text which substantiates the presentation more effectively. Slides and hand-outs are the visual aids which create interest and motivation in students for the better learning process. Slides may have background stuff consisted of audio material but hand-outs are purely visuals.

8.3.11 Types of Presentations

There are four types of presentations on the basis of mode of expression, manner of preparation and kind of material. Their detail is as under:

(i) Reading

Reading is a more effective type of presentation. Politicians, delegates, and national negotiators of different departments use reading presentation. Speeches and presentations are prepared by the expert writers for the higher national figures like prime ministers, presidents of the states, army men, ministers of different departments. Every word of the reading presentation is carefully selected so that it may not bring any confusion or ambiguity. Slightly used ambiguous statements may create a problem and even can shake the good relations of the individuals, departments, countries, and nations.

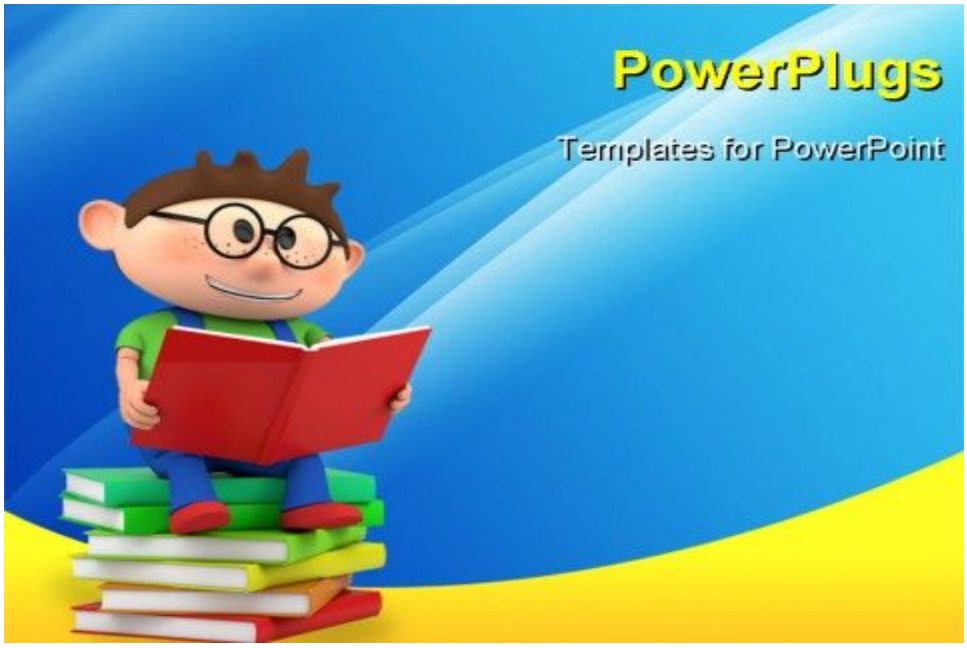


Figure 8.4: PowerPoint Template for reading/PowerPoint templates, PowerPoint…/Pinterest

(ii) Memorization

Memorization is another type of presentation that is very difficult because, in this type of presentation, the presenter memorizes the written text and stores it into his/her mind. It is difficult in the sense that if the presenter forgets any single word of the presentation, he may deviate completely from the track and may seize in continuation of the presentation which can create embarrassment for the presenter. When presenting, it is never a good idea to read from your slides or note cards. A

few quick glances are usually acceptable. And if you read everything word for word, you will seem disengaged from the audience. Even though most presenters know this, the situation still seems unavoidable. What if you experience a mental block and forget an entire section of your presentation? You cannot be expected to memorize an hour-long speech that is packed with crucial data. Is that even possible? If we were to ask the ancient Greeks and Romans, we would find that the answer is a loud "Yes". How did Cicero remember all of his famous orations? He used a technique called "the memory palace". The memory palace technique is formally known as the "method of Loci" and this name gives us some insight into how the whole thing actually works. Loci are the plural form of the Latin word for location. Our spatial memory is much stronger than our memory for words or ideas because our hunter-gatherer ancestors evolved to be able to navigate their world and remember their surroundings. When associated with spatial relationships, ideas become much more memorable—that's why tools like Prezi, which allow you to show your ideas within the context and lead your audience on a visual journey, can help make your presentation more memorable. To practice the technique, imagine yourself walking through a specific location. You then can associate each item you want to commit to memory to things you come across en route.

(iii) Extemporaneous Presentation

First two types of presentation are the presentations which are prepared, and their rehearsal is made. An extemporaneous presentation is not that one that can be prepared. This type of presentation is given without any proper preparation. Presenters of these presentations are highly skilled. They just listen to the others or observe the situation and whenever are called for presentation, they successfully express their views on the relevant issues. Presenters who have started their presentations the first time cannot handle this type of presentation. So they should use a reading presentation or memorization whatever is suitable for them. An extemporaneous speech is a perfect balance. This speech involves the speaker's use of notes and some embellishment to deliver a speech. To clear this up, the speaker who uses this method would have note cards or prompts that would guide him from point to point, but he uses his own words as he goes along. What makes this different than an impromptu speech is that he has a loose guideline for his speech. He did not memorize anything; he just used cues to know where to go next. There are advantages and disadvantages to this type of speech. For one, the audience will think you are a genius. You used a few notes and appeared to know everything about the topic. But this is not something that can be done quickly. The same fact-finding and research used for other types of speeches must be used here. The speaker also must rehearse this speech for timing, rhythm and flow. Now, if shooting from the hip is not your style, you may want to consider reading your speech.

(iv) Making Notes

The fourth type of presentation is based on notes making. The presenters are often chief guests, presidents of ceremonies, or special guests, who speak at the end of the most other presenters. During this time period, they carefully listen to the others' speeches, make certain points, and based on those points, they express their feelings, emotions and views. This is also a very challenging type of presentation for new presenters. Only expert and skilled presenters can use this type of presentation.

8.4 LINE LENGTH IN VISUALS

Numerous visuals are used to make the presentations effective and successful. But it should always be kept in mind that visuals should be followed with captions or with the other related text material. No doubt, visuals are self-speaking but not for all the people. So they should follow some guidelines or required material as instruction for the audience. In this manner, the entire space should not be given to the visuals only. They should be given only space that can highlight them, and they can attract the attention of the reader. Visuals should neither be too small nor too long rather they should be of considerable length in a slide. Many texts encourage using no more than seven lines and limiting lines to seven words. It is more helpful to think about whether you want the audience to read a long quote or to present a group of short lines, summarizing what you are saying. The shorter text lines keep the words in the background as you speak, focusing attention on you.

Figure 8.5: The Ideal Length for Every Online Content/ SEO Pressor Connect

Following are the guidelines in this regard:

- Use pictures to illustrate an object that you want to discuss.
- Use initial capitals followed by the lowercase letters.
- Use 18-point type for the body text and 24-point type for titles. Keep running the text to a minimum. Try to keep text to no more than six to eight lines per slide, the fewer if possible. If you project a long quote, stop speaking, and let people read it themselves
- Use only one font, preferably a sans serif fonts like Helvetica or Arial.
- For impact, make sparing use of different sizes, boldfacing or italics. For instance, a long quote when italicized is difficult to read. Too much boldfacing or too many different sizes gives a cluttered, "ransom note" effect that is very distracting.
- Use larger font sizes and/or different colors for your titles. When using the larger fonts, be sure to use the sizes that are easy to read (18 to 24 points) but not so large that they become distracting.

Colors: Use color to enhance your presentation. Color combinations should help viewers focus on key points, not on the combination itself. To use colors effectively, consider these guidelines:

- Use color intelligently to establish visual logic. Give each item (title, test and border) in the template its own color. Use only one color for emphasizing keywords.
- Use a background color; blue is commonly used.
- Use contrasting colors—white or yellow text on green or blue background.
- Use green and red sparingly. Ten percent of the population is color blind, and cannot distinguish between red and green. It is the best to assume that at least one person in every ten of your audience will be limited in his or her ability to translate color.
- Avoid hard-to-read color combinations, such as yellow on white and black on blue. Violet can also be very hard to read.
- Select combinations with an awareness of the technology. Colors that look well together in a sign or in print; as in a magazine or newspaper, will probably not work the same way projected onto a screen. For example, ambient light, which is what is produced by an LCD projector, will affect contrast greatly; it will turn a dark color, such as burgundy or deep green, into a pastel.
- Use what is known to work well. Yellow backgrounds with black lettering work well in most situations (think about the school buses). The other good combinations are deep-blue backgrounds with yellow letters or grey backgrounds with black letters.

- Evaluate templates before using them. Programs such as PowerPoint have a variety of background templates with color schemes that are handsome and exciting at first glance, but when you make your selection, always try to keep your audience in mind. Look at it from their standpoint—will this combination help them understand your point? If you are not certain about the combination, do not use it.

8.4.1 Animation

The animation is making text move. In slides, text can appear and depart from the slide by many animated routes—for instance, text can slide to the left or right, up or down, or disintegrate or blossom out from the center. Animation can emphasize important points visually while you explain them verbally. However, the idea is to enhance production, not provide gimmicky entertainment. For the said purpose follow these guidelines:

- Use only one text animation. Remember that the audience should be tracking as closely as possible with the presenter. To keep the audience tracking, pick only one primary reading transition. For example, a simple "wipe-right" text animation—the text appears to move off the screen left to right—will keep the reader's eye going in the normal reading direction.
- Treat previous lines carefully. Fading or subduing the previous bullets, when the new information appears will help to keep the audience focused, but select a subdued tone for the previous bullets. Using an entirely different color will only draw attention away from the new text you are trying to introduce.
- Use animated graphics to make complex points. The multimedia and the electronic presentation can use graphics effectively to show the progression of complicated points. Process steps, timelines and flow charts all benefit from animated graphics. Keep in mind that being consistent is important when using animated graphics. Your audience will appreciate the consistent use of color contrast and special effects.

8.4.2 Sound Effects

Sound effects can accompany the animation. As the word appears on the screen, audiences can hear sounds such as the clicking of an old type, the writer or brakes squealing. Remember, the point is to enhance the contents of the slides, not distract the audience from them. In this regard use the following guidelines:

- Do not use sound at all.
- Use the same sound for each transition, if it has to be used in any case. In the other words, develop an audio logic so that each instance of the sound indicates a repetition of a step in the sequence (new slide or a new line of the text).)

- Use subdued and undramatic sounds for the transition. The first time you use a ricocheting bullet sound, you may get a reaction from your audience, but the second time you use it, the reaction may be greatly diminished, and the third time may have no effect at all.
- If you have a special point that you want to emphasize, or if you want to use a sound effect for some comic relief in a deadly serious situation, go ahead but use these strategies sparingly.

8.4.3 Slide Transitions

Slide transitions are like animations. Like scene cuts in a movie, they help move one set of visual data out of view and move a new set into view. The goal of using this device is to create a sequence logic—each instance of the event means that another type of data is about to appear. If your audience concentrates on the transition rather than on the message, you have lost your audience. Follow the following guidelines for the said context:

- Be consistent. Use the same transition for the same kind of event. Make each slide move off to the left or right or whatever you have chosen.
- Use only one or two simple transitions.
- Select transitions in order to aid the viewer. For example, a transition that "wipes up" will help to guide the watcher's eye back to the top of the slide so that the subject of the slide is immediately identified. A simple fade-to-black between sections of a presentation signals that a new topic is being considered.

8.4.4 Visual Aids and Slides

The visual aids that you use on your slides are the same that you would use in a hardcopy report: Outlines; slides or drawings; tables and graphs. In addition, consider paper hand-outs. Many slides are, in effect, outlines. They are lists of words in some kind of hierarchy (Level 1 and Level 2, etc.). Like all outlines, this type of slide shows the audience the sections and subsections of the presentation. And like all of the outlines they project very little depth or indication of the relationship of ideas. This device, while common, is a background device (see above).

Tables and graphs can present data in a way that enables the audience to grasp relationships right away. An oral explanation of the relationship among the percentages that affect a pay increase is hard to follow but a table or graph makes it clear. Note, however, that the space on a slide is restricted, so complex tables (as are often produced as part of scientific experiments) can be hard to project.

Paper hand-outs are often useful for a presentation. PowerPoint has a function that allows a speaker to print out and distribute the entire presentation in a series of "thumbnails", small versions of the actual slide. This device, although commonly used, is essentially just an outline, with none of the attendant contextualization that the speaker provides. You can supply some of that context by using PowerPoint's Notes function and handing out copies of the slides with your commentary in the note window. One speech expert suggests this: "If what you say, when you expand the bullet points, is useful for the audience to take away.

In addition, paper hand-outs can more effectively show complex text, numbers and data graphics (Tufte, 22, Year?). A hand-out can replace or supplement projected visual aids. Pass out copies of a key image, perhaps a table. The audience can make notes on it as you speak.

8.5 MAKING AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

A presenter needs to adopt certain strategies and techniques for effective presentation because poor presentations cannot bring fruitful results and the presenters remains unsuccessful to convey the accurate message which is wastage of time and expense both. Moreover, poor image is created in the minds of the audience and the presenter loses his/her impression. So the presenter should keep the following things in mind:

- The topic should be written / selected clearly.
- Relevant material should be collected.
- Audience expectations should be understood.
- Collected material should be organized well.
- Relevant audio-visual aids should be managed.
- The presentation should be written and then prepared.
- Rehearsal is very important before the presentation.
- The presentation should be given with confidence.
- The presentation should be clear, concise and precise.
- The presentation should be correctly given.
- Every point should be expressed with clear and relevant examples.
- Appropriate gestures should be used during the presentation.
- Time should be managed; extra and irrelevant information should be avoided.
- To make an effective presentation, develop your introduction, navigate the body, develop your conclusion, rehearse your presentation and deliver your presentation.

Figure 8.6: Creating an effective PowerPoint Presentation/Slide Player

8.5.1 Develop the Introduction

The introduction establishes both the tone and the topic of the speech. Your tone is your attitude toward the listeners and the subject matter. Use the introduction to establish the relevance of the presentation to the audience. Be serious, but not dull. Avoid being so intense that no one can laugh, or so flip that the topic seems insignificant. Be explicit about your purpose and the sections of the presentation. In the other words, follow the old advice of "Tell 'em what you are going to tell 'em" (Bacall; Tracy,2003).

Follow these guidelines:

- You do not need to begin your report with a joke, a quotation by an authority, or an anecdote, but a well-chosen light story often helps relax both you and the audience.
- Explain why your report is important to your audience.
- Present your conclusions or recommendations right away. Then the audience will have a viewpoint from which to interpret the data you present.
- Explain how you assembled your report.

- Indicate your special knowledge of or concern with the subject.
- Identify the situation that required you to prepare the report (or the person who requested it).
- Preview the main points so your listeners can understand the order in which you will present your ideas.

8.5.2 Navigate the Body

Many studies have shown that the listeners simply do not listen to everything the speaker says. Therefore, you should give several minutes to each main idea—long enough to get each main point across, but not long enough to labor it.

(i) Use Transitions Liberally

Clear transitions are very helpful to an audience of the listeners. Your transitions remind them of the report's structure, which you established in the preview. Indicate how the next main idea fits into the overall report and why it is important to know about it. For instance, a proposal may seem very costly until the shortness of the payback period is emphasized.

(ii) Emphasize Important Details

Presumably, if you have created a storyboard, you know the details that you want to emphasize for the audience, and you have placed them on slides. Choose details that are especially meaningful to the audience. Explain any anticipated changes in equipment, staff, or policy and show how these changes will be beneficial.

(iii) Impose a Time Limit

Find out how long the audience expects the presentation to last and fit your speech into that time frame. If they expect 15 minutes and you talk for 15 minutes, they will feel very good. Generally, speak for less time than is required. It is much better to present one or two main ideas carefully than to attempt to communicate more information than your listeners can comfortably grasp.

8.5.3 Develop a Conclusion

The conclusion section restates the main ideas presented in the body of the report. In the same vein follow these guidelines:

- As you conclude your report, you should actually say, "In conclusion ..." to capture (or recapture) your audience's' interest. For a proposal, stress the main advantages of your ideas and urge your listeners to take a specific action.
- For a recommendation report, emphasize the most significant data presented for each criterion, and clearly present your recommendations.
- Use a visual to summarize the important data.
- End the report by asking whether your listeners have any questions.

8.5.4 Rehearse your Presentation

Rehearsal of the presentation is a very important step because it would bring clarity and fluency in the presentation. The people, who make rehearsals before their presentations, are always successful presenters. Those who do not care for the rehearsal of presentation face difficulty in their expression. Their fluency becomes very poor and they face difficulty in choosing appropriate vocabulary due to which they create a very poor impression on the audience. Therefore, it is highly advised action for every presenter to make a rehearsal before the presentation. During rehearsals, go straight through the speech, using note cards. If it is a formal presentation, when you practice, wear the same clothes you will wear in the actual presentation.

(i) Practice Developing a Conversational Quality

When you make your speech, sound like a person speaking to people, and use both voice and gestures to emphasize important points. Even the best information will fall on deaf ears if it is delivered like a robotic time-and-weather announcement. Rehearse until you feel secure with your report, but always stop short of memorizing it. If you memorize, you will tend to grope for memorized words rather than concentrating on the listeners and letting the words flow.

Figure 8.7: How to rehearse your speech / Write Out Loud

(ii) Practice Handling your Technology and Visual Aids

Understand how to open and navigate your presentation. If necessary, have the presentation on several media. Often speakers have the same file both on a disk and on their laptops. If you are unfamiliar with the technology, practice opening the files from both a disk and a laptop. Because technological arrangements in new places can be difficult to navigate, have a backup plan in case your technology does not work. Practice giving the presentation so that you know how to open the software program and advance and reverse the slides. Practise talking to the audience and looking at the screen simultaneously; only for the slides that you will use as foreground slides.

If you have paper visual aids or overhead transparencies, arrange these in the order they will be needed, and decide where you will place them, when you are finished with them. If a listener asks you to return to a visual, you want to be able to find it easily. If you are using hand-outs, decide whether to distribute them before or during the presentation. Distributing them before the presentation eliminates the need to interrupt your flow of thought later, but because the listeners will flip through the hand-outs, they may be distracted as you start. Distributing them during the presentation causes an interruption, but listeners will focus immediately on the visual.

Rehearse Practice your presentation at least once under conditions similar to those in which you will make the presentation, particularly for reports to large groups. Use a room of approximately the same size, with the same type of equipment for projecting your voice and your visuals. If you have never used a microphone, now is the time to practice with the one.

8.5.5 Deliver Your Presentation

You will increase your effectiveness, if you use notes and adopt a comfortable extemporaneous style.

Figure 8.8: How to Relax for Your Presentation-Expert Advice/Patricia Fripp

(i) Use Notes

Experienced speakers have found that the outlines prepared on a few large note cards (5 by 8 inches, one side only) are easier to handle than the outlines on many small note cards. Some speakers even prefer outlines on one or two sheets of standard paper, mounted on light cardboard for easier handling. The outline should contain clear main headings and subheadings. Make sure your outline has a plenty of white space so that you can keep your place.

(ii) Adopt a Comfortable Style

The extemporaneous method results in natural, conversational delivery and helps you concentrate on the audience. Using this method, you can direct your attention to the listeners, referring to the outline only to jog your memory and to ensure that ideas are presented in the proper order. Smile. Take time to look at individual audience members and to collect your thoughts. Instead of rushing to your next main point, check whether members of the audience understood your last point. Your word choice may occasionally suffer, when you speak extemporaneously, but reports delivered in this way still communicate what you want to say better than those memorized or read.

The following suggestions will help as you face your listeners and deliver the presentation:

1. Look directly at each listener at least once during the report. With experience, you will be able to tell from your listeners' faces whether you are

communicating well. If they seem puzzled or inattentive, repeat the main idea, give additional examples for clarity, or solicit questions. Do not proceed in lockstep through your notes.

2. Make sure you can be heard, but also try to speak conversationally. You should feel a sense of your voice as a round, full tone, projecting with conviction. You should also feel that your voice fills the space of the room, with the sound of your voice bouncing back slightly to your own ears. The listeners should get the impression that you are talking to them rather than just presenting a report. Inexperienced speakers often talk too rapidly.
3. Try to become aware of—and to eliminate—your distracting mannerisms. No one wants to see speakers brush their hair, scratch their arms, rock back and forth on the balls of their feet and smack their lips. If the mannerism is pronounced enough, it may be all the audience remembers of your presentation. Stand firmly on both feet without slumping or swaying.

8.6 WORKSHEETS

8.6.1 Work Sheet for Preparing an Oral Presentation

- Identify your audience. What is your listeners' level of knowledge about the topic? What is their level of interest in the entire speech? Why are they attending? What do they need?
- Create an outline showing the main point and sub points. Which strategy will best help the audience? Problem-solution? Narrative? IMRD?
- Assign a time limit to each point.
- Create a storyboard. What visual aid will illustrate each point most effectively?
- Decide whether you need any kind of projection or display equipment like laptop, LCD projector or a flip chart?
- Review the speaking location. Do you know how to make your technology (laptop, disk and projector) interact with the technology resident at the site?
- Determine your relationship with the slides. Will they be foreground or background for you?
- Prepare clearly written note cards—with just a few points on each.
- Rehearse the speech several times, including how you will actually handle the technology.

8.6.2 Worksheet for Evaluating an Oral Presentation

Answer these questions:

1. Clarity

   Did the speaker tell you the point early in the speech? Could you tell when the speaker moved to a new sub-point?

2. Tone
   Did the speaker sound conversational? Did the speaker go too fast? Go too slow? Speak in a monotone?

3. Use of technology
   Did the speaker interact effectively with the slides? Did the slides help you understand the content, or were they distracting?

8.7 GLOBALIZATION AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Giving a presentation to a foreign or non-English-speaking audience is easier, if you give some thought to relating to an audience whose culture is not your own. A key idea for your planning is that although English is commonly studied as a second language, “English proficiency within a given audience can vary widely, so the best approach is to simplify and clarify content at every turn" (Zielinski, 2004). In order to simplify and clarify content, follow the following tips: Use simple sentences, make clear transitions, avoid digressions, reduce the use of potentially confusing pronouns, restate key points, pause periodically, use subject-verb-object word order and repeat phrases using the exact wording. If you call it a "plan" the first time, continue to use that word; do not switch to "proposal" or "map" or "vision" (Zielinski, 2004).

Also, be aware that the international audience's reaction to you may differ greatly from what you are used to. For example, in Japan, it is not unusual for audience members to close their eyes in order to convey concentration and attentiveness, while in the United States closed eyes are a sign that you are lulling the audience to sleep. Applause is a generally universal sign of approval, but whistling in Europe is a negative reaction to your presentation. Finally, know that the other cultures have a different sense of acceptable personal space than Americans have. The Middle Easterners and the Latin Americans tend to stand much closer than Americans find comfortable, while many Asian cultures stand quite far away from one another. Keep this in mind, if you have others on stage with you or if you will be going into the audience for your presentation (McKinney, "International", 2004).

Be aware of body language conventions. Hand gestures that are accepted in the United States, such as the A-OK symbol (the circle formed with your index finger and thumb) or the thumbs-up gesture, are considered obscene in some countries. Pointing with a finger can be impolite; use a fully extended hand. In some countries, emphatic gestures are poorly received. Body language that is unwittingly offensive can cause an audience to focus on what is inappropriate and lose the content of your presentation (Zielinski 2004).

8.7.1 Plan for Differences in Technology

Bring a picture of the equipment that you will need during your presentation. Bring a voltage converter. Remember that many countries have different sized standard paper and may use a two-hole instead of a three-hole punch. Most importantly, have a backup plan and keep a sense of humor (McKinney, "Public, "Professional", 2003). For further reference, check out these websites:

Executive Planet at <www.executiveplanet.comi> is a guide to all of the aspects for conducting international business: etiquette, customs, and culture. If you will be presenting in a foreign country, you can find out the details of greetings, business attire, and meeting formalities as well as general information for many different countries.

For insight into the cultural dynamics of the other countries and regions and how this may impact your business dealings abroad, refer to "International Business Etiquette and Manners" at <www.cyberlink.com/>. Your presentations will be more effective, if you know the appropriate way you should act. Although addressed to potential conference speakers, this section of the unit offers an invaluable overview on preparing to give a presentation to an international audience.

When answering questions, make sure everyone listens and understands each question before you begin to answer it. If you cannot answer a question during the question-and-answer session, say so and assure the questioner that you will find the answer and provide it later on.

8.8 QUALITIES OF A GOOD COMMUNICATOR

A good communicator has the following qualities:

- A good communicator is always well aware of his target audience.
- He/she has an audience-oriented approach.
- He prepares his presentation well before time.
- He collects all the required information.
- He organizes the collected information with zeal and zest.
- He is always committed to the task he has to perform.
- He makes everything clear before presenting it to the audience.
- He does not present for the sake of presentation rather he does so with a clear purpose in his mind.
- He makes rehearsal several times before his presentation.
- He takes great care of his fluency and choice of vocabulary.
- He answers the harsh questions very politely.

Figure 8.9: Are you really a good communicator? / Training Journal

Exercises

1. Create a PowerPoint presentation of two or three slides that illustrates a problem in one of your current projects. Give a brief speech (2 to 3 minutes) explaining the problem.

   Alternate 1: Prepare two or three PowerPoint slides that illustrate the solution or its effects, and present the entire problem and solution to the class in a 4- to 5-minute speech.

   Alternate 2: Prepare the PowerPoint presentation in groups of two to four. Select a speaker for the group. Give the speech.

2. Report on a situation with which you are involved. Your work on an assignment for this class is probably most pertinent, but your instructor will provide his or her own requirements. Depending on the available time, draw a visual on the board, make transparency, create a hand-out, or prepare one or two PowerPoint slides. In 2 minutes, explain the point of the visual aid. Class members will complete and/or discuss the evaluation questions given above.

3. For Exercises 1 and 2, each member of the audience should prepare a question to ask the speaker. Conduct a question-and-answer session. When the session is finished, discuss the value and relevance of the questions that were asked. What constitutes a good question? Also, evaluate the answers. What constitutes a good answer?

4. Create a PowerPoint version of a document you have previously written for this class. Upload the PowerPoint to the Web. Give a 4 to 5-minute speech using the on-line slides.
   Alternate: Upload the PowerPoint presentation created above. Have classmates, as assigned by your teacher, read and evaluate the report. Use the evaluation sheet for the appropriate type of report in the appropriate chapter.

5. Using screens that you download from the Web, create a PowerPoint presentation for your classmates in which you do either of the following:
   - Explain the effective elements of a well-designed screen.
   - Explain how to use the screen to perform an activity (order plane tickets, contact a sales representative and/or perform an advanced search).

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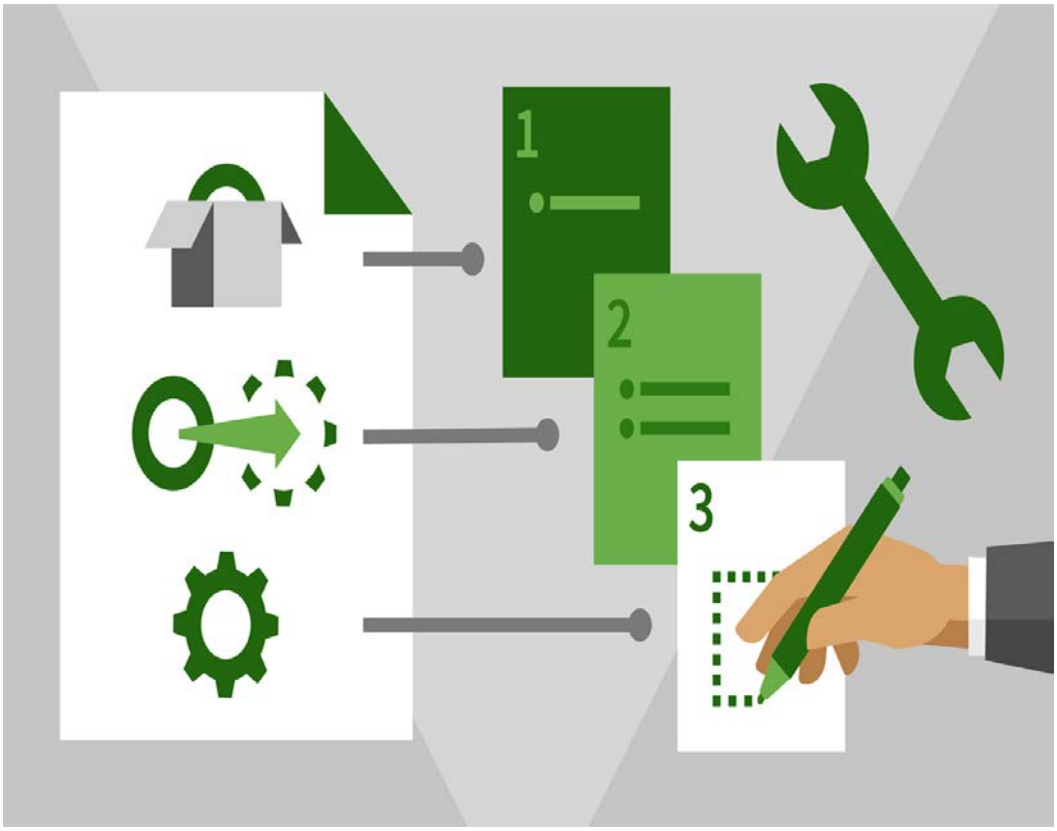
Unit–9

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION (LETTERS AND APPLICATIONS)



Writer: Dr Shamim Ali

Reviewer: Dr Rashida Imran

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INTRODUCTION

The ending unit 9 of the book on "Basics of Technical Writing" is an effort to make this book a real practical aid to you, Dear Students, for the successful technical communication. The last unit 8 was a detailed description of an efficacious oral technical communication whereas the main focus of this last unit is on writing professional letters, applications as well as all-inclusive curriculum vitae. This unit has also an added spice for professional technical communication in form of a detailed section on conducting professional interviews. Therefore, this unit deals with all the important factors of writing different types of letters effectively, grasping the essential parts of a formal business letter, developing various types of applications successfully, preparing and generating your own electronic resume and developing the art of interviewing. As far as writing curriculum vitae is concerned, it is a need of every one of us and especially of technical communicators in order to get the attractive jobs; this unit provides all the basic and advanced knowledge about it. For example, in the relative section even the information about the advanced form of it, electronic resume, has been conveyed. Almost the same need is there how to appear in an interview for a successful appearance. This unit is a complete guideline in this regard too. So Dear Students for you to be a successful technical communicator in both of written and spoken media, it is your first obligation to go through all of the units of this book thoroughly, attempt all the exercises and worksheets provided throughout as well as to practically implement whatever you learn through these units.

OBJECTIVES

On the completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Write different types of letters effectively;
2. Understand the essential parts of a formal business letter;
3. Develop numerous types of applications effectively;
4. Prepare their own Curriculum Vitae;
5. Generate an electronic resume; and
6. Know the art of interviewing.

9.1 OVERVIEW

Like oral communication, written communication is also of vital importance for the learners of graduate and postgraduate levels. Most of the students even after completion of their higher degree remain unable to write formal letters, applications, and reports. This unit includes parts of the letter, types of letters, standard letter formats, numerous types of applications and long formal reports.

9.2 ESSENTIAL PARTS OF A FORMAL BUSINESS LETTER

There are following seven essential parts of a formal business letter:

- Heading
- Date
- Inside address
- Salutation
- Body of the message
- Complimentary close
- Name and Signature

9.2.1 Heading

The heading is the first essential part of the formal business letter. It includes the name of the organization and contact details. Heading can be on the left side of the page, maybe in the center or on the right side of the page. Many business

organizations follow different headings. But there are certain conditions, on the basis of which heading can be at any side of the page. If the writer is using a full block format, then heading should be on the left side of the page. On the other hand, if the writer is using a modified block format or semi-block format, then the heading should be on the right side of the page. However, if the name of the organization exceeds the word limit of 10 words, then heading looks suitable in the middle of the page.

9.2.2 Date

The date is written on the left side of the page, if the writer is using a full block format. It can be written on the right side of the page, if the writer is using a modified block format or semi-block format. Americans write the month first, followed by the date and year, for example, 10/20/2019. On the other side, British first write the date, then the month followed by the year, for example, 20/10/2019. However, it is better to write the name of the month to avoid any ambiguity.

9.2.3 Inside Address

Inside address is the contact details of the addressee including: His/her name (if applicable), position, department, organization/institution, street, city, and country. Inside address is always written on the left side of the page. For example:

Dr. Sophia Ali
Assistant Professor
NUST Business School
The National University of Science &Technology
Islamabad, Pakistan.

9.2.4 Salutation

Salutation includes a statement of respect. It is an address to the audience to get somebody’s attention before the start of the message. For example:

Dear sir, Dear Madam, My dear Sir, My dear Madam, Dear Mr. Ali, My dear Mr. Ali, Dear Ms (neutral) instead of Miss.

9.2.5 Body of the Message

The actual message starts with a positive attitude by seeking the attention of the audience. Sometimes, the writer says 'Thank you' at the beginning of the message. Then he/she introduces the matter for which the letter is written. Details are described after the introduction. The final section includes concluding remarks with an action to be initiated by the receiver/reader. It is worth mentioning that opening and closing paragraphs are written with great care because first impressions are

often lasting impressions and effective closing imprints strong marks on the memory of the reader which can make message effective.

9.2.6 Complimentary Close

The complimentary close is the expression of closeness to the audience. It includes the following statements:

Yours truly: Written to the strangers or to those whom the writer is first time writing.

Yours thankfully: Written in the condition, when the writer seeks a favor from the reader.

Yours affectionately: Written to close friends as an expression of love.

Yours obediently: Not written in informal letters.

9.2.7 Name and Signature

In the end, the writer writes his/her name, and above the name puts his/her signatures. The writer should always check the letter signed before posting/mailing because it will have no authenticity without signatures.

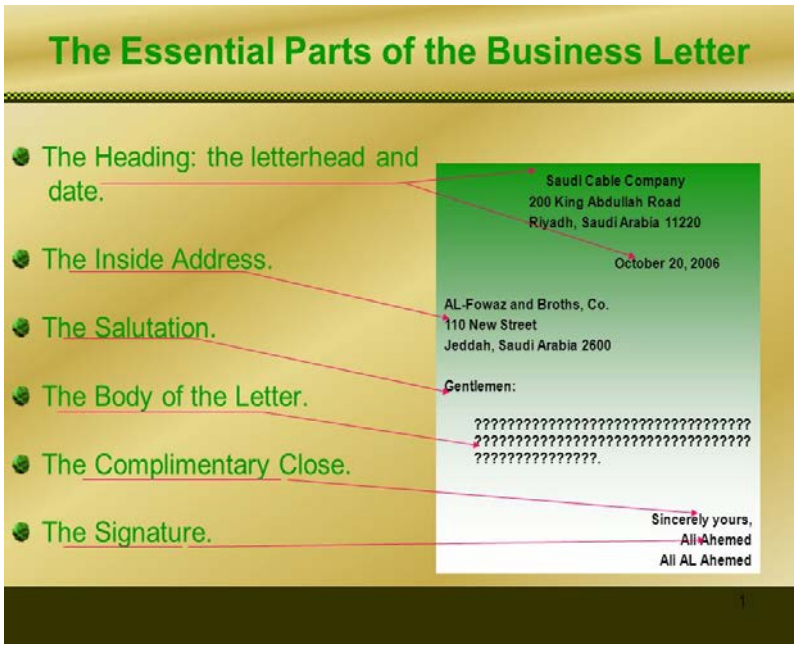

Figure 9.2: The Essential Parts of the Business Letter - PPT video online download/SlidePlayer

9.3 STANDARD LETTER FORMATS

International organizations follow some standard letter formats, out of which three-letter formats are as follows:

- Full block format
- Modified block format
- Semi block format

9.3.1 Full Block Format

This is mostly used format in today's written communication because the letters are typed on computers. It saves the time of the communicator as there is no need to take the cursor to and fro while writing the message. All the essential parts of a letter are written on the left side of the page. For example:

British Embassy, Islamabad, Pakistan

Dated: 20/10/2019
Inside address
Salutation
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
Complimentary close

Shamim Ali

Figure 9.3: Full Block Format

9.3.2 Modified Block Format

The modified block is another standard international format used in business letters. In this format, date, complimentary close, name, and signature are written on the right side of the page. Heading may be at any place according to the situation. Every paragraph is non-indented like that of a full block format as it starts from the left side of the page. In this way, this format resembles both of the other formats. Its paragraphs are like full block format whereas its date, inside address, name, and signature are located like that of semi-block format. It depends on every organization, which format it uses.

British Embassy, Islamabad, Pakistan

Dated: 20/10/2019

Inside address
Salutation

……
……
……
……
……
……
……

……
……
……
……
……
……
……

Complimentary close

Shamim Ali

Figure 9.4: Modified Block Format

9.3.3 Semi Block Format

This format is also excessively used by different organizations in their written letter correspondence. This format is different from that of the other two formats on the basis of its indented paragraphs. But it is the same as a modified block format with its right side placement of date, complimentary close, name, and signature.

British Embassy, Islamabad, Pakistan
Dated: 20/10/2019
Inside address
Salutation

……
……
……
……
……

……
……
……
……
……
……

Complimentary close

Shamim Ali

Figure 9.5: Semi Block Format

9.4 TYPES OF LETTERS

There are different types of business letters that are written in a routine. For example:

- 9.4.1 Inquiry Letter
- 9.4.2 Reply Letter
- 9.4.3 Sales Letters
- 9.4.4 Order Letter
- 9.4.5 Complaint Letter

- 9.4.6 Adjustment Letter
- 9.4.7 Collection Letter
- 9.4.8 Letters of Recommendation
- 9.4.9 Cover Letter
- 9.4.10 Letters of Resignation

9.4.1 Inquiry Letter

This letter is written to the receiver to get the information about the prices, incentives, credit offers, services and contact details of some persons or by a company to request for information on how to go about developing new business. Although, nowadays, every type of such information is available on websites of the different organizations, still every organization does not upload certain information for which, the writer has to enquire. When writing inquiry letters, there are a few things that you should keep in mind. Start the letter by mentioning what you are enquiring about. If it is a job, for instance, mention how you learned about the hiring company. Be specific, brief, and straightforward, but remain within the boundaries of etiquette. Include relevant information such as the date and time by which you need the information. Write in an active voice and provide relevant facts. If there are any supportive documents required, mention them in the letter and attach them at the end. Close by thanking the recipient for his/her time and mentioning that you await his/her response. These letters should be written very politely because we are requesting someone to provide us the information for nothing and no one has to respond to the inquiries written in an impolite manner.

9.4.2 Reply Letter

A reply letter is written in response to the inquiry letters. Although, at present, the reply letter writer is not getting any apparent benefit from the enquirer, however, later on this first contact may result in further good relations. So it should be taken as an opportunity and the required information should be provided to the enquirer. Always acknowledge receipt of the letter, provide your answer in detail and make it simple for comprehension. In the end, appreciate the reader for taking an interest and offer assistance for any further questions.

9.4.3 Sales Letter

Typically, a sales letter serves the purpose of convincing a buyer or a customer to purchase a product or service. Written in an attractive manner that strikes the interest of the potential customer, a sales letter has details of the company and the service they are offering, along with advantageous points on how their product should be chosen over others. *A sales letter is simply defined as a letter which is composed in order to introduce new services or products, which a company is*

offering or about to offer to its potential buyers. The purpose of a sales letter is to give maximum public exposure to the newly introduced or changed services, offers, products and business dealers prior to implementation. The advantages of sending a sales letter include increased sales, business engagement of new buyers, boosting mutual trust between buyers and sellers, provision of a beforehand notice of the expected changes to avoid any buyer inconveniences, development of strong links, business follow-ups and generation of maximum traffic.

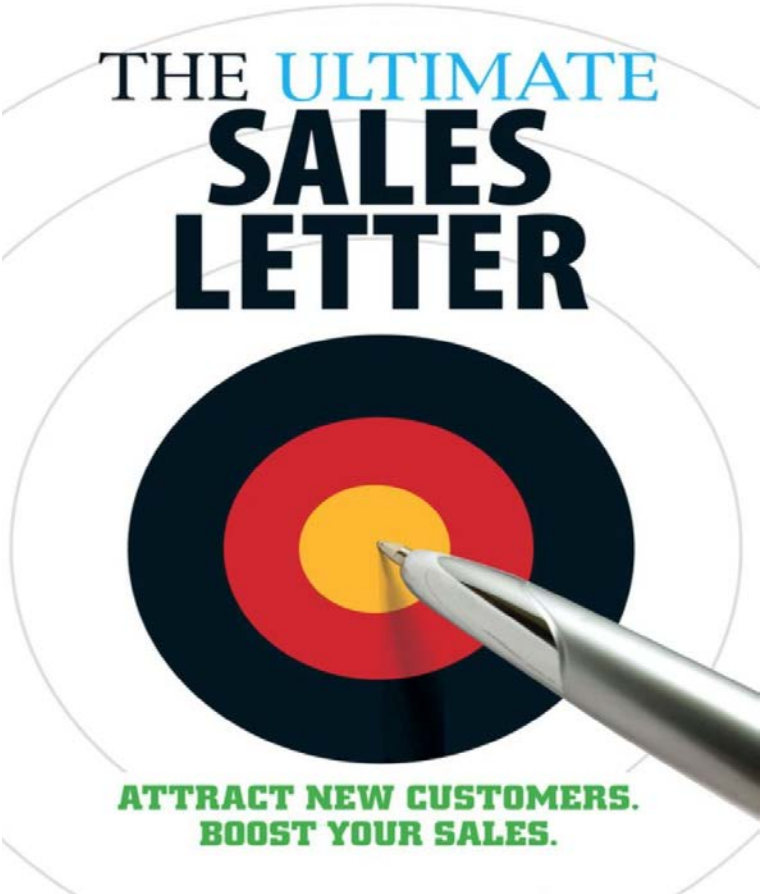

Figure 9.6: Write Effective Sales Letter (32 Pro Tips)/iEduNote

Sales letters are usually written for any of the following reasons:

- **To introduce new products**– An appealing product description including features, cost and consumer benefits will be added to the sales letter.
- **To announce new services**– A complete explanation of the service ordered, how it will work and how it will be useful for the consumers shall be added.

- **To announce new or limited offers**– Sales letter should clearly explain what the offer includes, for whom it is valid, and till when it can be activated.
- **To inform consumers with accountancy or business changes**– The sales letter will include a thorough introduction of new employers and shall be sent by the employer himself to develop a solid nexus.

9.4.4 Order Letter

An order letter is written to get some goods from the manufacturer or distributor. This letter needs no detailed explanation rather it includes the name of the goods, number/quantity of goods, size of the goods, shapes of the goods, colors of the goods, brands and prices of the goods. The manufacturer does everything to provide the ordered goods to the sender with the ultimate effect of money, so the writer should clearly mention the method of payment whether it would be paid through cheques, on a cash basis, or through the transfer of accounts in his order letter. Moreover, the writer should also mention the mode of delivery; it is required either through air transport, water transport, or road transport. It is very important to mention because it is always subject to the urgency of the situation and the ease of the customer. Furthermore, the customer should also mention the time of delivery because if the goods are delayed and the customer cannot receive them on time, it may cause embarrassment to him or to his own customers. One other thing is also important and that is a request for strong casing because most probably it is the customer who has to pay for that and if the goods re damaged then he/she cannot claim, if he has not mentioned about the application of casing to the delicate products which are expected to be broken on the way to the customer. As the name suggests, an order letter or a purchase letter carries information about an order for a product or a service. Order Letters are a kind of business letter that is written by a customer or client when purchasing a vendor's product or requesting the company's service. It is the very first document that is, when a particular business transaction takes place. Besides it being a detailed informative structure containing exact dimensions and quantities of the desired products, order letter can also be sent along with the due payment. It thus serves as a legal record of a transaction between the business owner and the vendor.

For example, Order Letters have the following parts:

1. The letterhead of the company sending the Order Letter.
2. In case the Order Letter has no letterhead, the sender's contact details are supplied.
3. The date on which the letter is sent.
4. The recipient's name, title, name of the company, and its specific address.
5. The salutation.
6. The body of the Order Letter.

7. The closing.
8. And the sender's name with his or her signature.

The quality and tone of Order Letters, just like any other business letter, is one of formality, clarity and directness. It goes straight to the point. Formality is done to prevent ambiguity and therefore errors. A single error can mean a big difference in business transactions.

9.4.5 Complaint Letter

A complaint letter is written, when the customer gets hurt by the manufacturer/ distributor in any case while dealing with him. There may be certain conditions that initiate the situation to write complaints. For example:

- When the customer receives damaged goods.
- When the customer receives irrelevant goods.
- If he/she receives late deliveries.
- If there is any confusion on the mutual business agreements.
- If the manufacturer has compromised over the quality.
- If the customer has been misbehaved or not properly treated by anyone from the manufacturer side.

These situations cause trouble and the customer writes complaints. But the experts advise that complaint letter should not be written at the time of severe anger because the message would have the intensity of anger in it and may result in breakage of the relations of both the parties. It does not mean that the customer should make the complaint after a long delay because it would lose the effect of the complaint. So although complaints should be written promptly after the anger is lessened. Moreover, the following things should be avoided in writing a complaint letter:

- Negative expressions should be avoided.
- Accusations should not be made in the complaint letter.
- The receiver should not be blamed for incompetence or carelessness.
- No threats should be given to the receiver.

Complaints written in positive mode with encouraging and positive expression can win the favor of the receiver and has the potential to strengthen the relationship between both of the parties.

9.4.6 Adjustment Letter

An adjustment letter is written in response to the complaint letter. Adjustment letters may be written in different ways depending on the policy of the company,

the writer is working in. In this regard, the company may have any of the following policies:

- No response.
- The customer is always right.
- Who is at fault: Company or the customer?

In the first situation, if the company has a policy of no response, then the writer needs not to write any response to the complaint. In the second case, if the company has the policy that customer is always right, the same type of already prepared letter is filled up with the name and contact details of the receiver and an apologetic expression is sent to the customer with the assurance that soon he will compensated for his loss. However, the third type of letter is written very carefully. It may have two types of expressions. One in case of finding the company at fault but still, it is a simple apologetic letter and assurance of providing the lost goods and avoidance of such losses in the future. But if the customer is at fault, then the writer has to select the choice of vocabulary and sentences very carefully by giving sufficient time to writing a letter. This type of letter needs special skills, otherwise, when we are refusing the other in an unskilled way, we can even lose the customer.

9.4.7 Collection Letter

Collection letter is not a single letter but a series of letters written to the customer, whose accounts are overdue but there is a chance that at the same time, the amount might have been sent by the customer when the letter is written. Moreover, the customer may have some crucial problems including social problems, health problems, family problems, or even financial problems. That is why; the experts suggest sending 3-5 reminders to the customer with the name of the company, date and the payable amount. They will work; if not then a series of letters should be written. First, the writer should send a message with the expression that if the customer has already posted/sent the amount overdue, so he should ignore this letter. If still, he has not received the money, then write the letter stating that there may be some problem on the part of the customer, if it is so, then he should inform the sender bout the problem and if this is not the situation, then he should pay the amount overdue. After that, he should write a letter of justification expressing that the customer ordered the goods which were sent. In this way the sender has fulfilled the part of the bargain, he should be sent the amount and it is now the customer's responsibility to send the money. It does not mean that the sender should waste his time and energy on writing polite letters. After writing the letters mentioned above, now he reserves the right to be strict and he should write a threatening letter. The reason is that if the customers one by one are following the same path and not paying their overdue, it may affect the image of the sender and the people will start feeling that he is a weak person; and that will create adverse effects for him.

Therefore, a serious attitude is required which does not mean that the sender should be impolite rather it means that there is no need to be polite. He should give a short deadline and tell him for the legal consequences which will bring harsh realities for the customer.

9.4.8 Letters of Recommendation

A letter written by a person, to effectively increase the value of a second person, to a third one in the course of a new job prospect or admission, among the other things is known as a letter of recommendation. A recommendation letter for an employee also known as an employment reference letter is a letter written by a manager about an employee, detailing his/her attributes and what he/she is best at. Employees can use this letter, when they go to apply for another job, giving them more of a chance of getting it; if you are the employee you should ask your boss for one and if you are a boss needing to write a recommendation letter for an employee. Make sure you can write positive things about the employee before accepting to write the employment recommendation letter. If you are not able to say many positive things then it is the best to decline the letter as it would not be comfortable to write it.

9.4.9 Cover Letter

A letter that accompanies curriculum vitae and is a precise and attractive documentation of the person and his personal and professional achievements that eventually creates an interest in the reader to go for the resume is known as a cover letter.

Attaching a Cover Letter to your Resu
I am writing to express my interest in the author's assistant role you posted on Monster.com...
the balance

Figure 9.7: Cover Letter Sample for a Resume / The Balance Careers

The general goal of a cover letter is to prove your exclusivity as a candidate, one that could bring value toward the position; as well as to show that you are well-educated, experienced, and passionate about it. A well-written cover letter is a chance to show the reader that you have incorporated these important attributes. A tailored, persuasive cover letter displays that you have taken the time toward researching the company plus understanding the employer's necessities and job requirements. It is a chance to express that you are passionate about the role, intense to be part of the group and exhibit the value you would enhance to the firm. Beforehand you apply for your trance job, follow these guidelines that will make your cover letter stand out. Your letter must not go over one page. Use small paragraphs as well as bullet points when possible. Evade flowery or unnecessary words while fewer words would get your point across similarly well. Clarify what special talents and qualities you could bring to the work. Do not clarify what the job would do for you. Avoid empty clichés, for example, "I am a self-starter" otherwise "I am a people person." Use active words and phrases. Avoid "are" plus "is. Do not write generic commendations about the company. Be as precise as you can and show your knowledge of the firm. Research the firm using its own website, in addition to business info sites, for example, hoovers.com and fastcompany.com. Check newscast sources for recent firm events that you could refer in your letter. Diverse features of your background will fit diverse jobs. Emphasise on related job experiences and skills. For example, an employer, for a research position, perhaps would not be interested in your innovative writing skills. Use high-quality white paper; it is denser than typewriter otherwise printer paper. Avoid decorative or colored stationery. Print a clean and absolute copy to send and not a photocopy.

9.4.10 Letters of Resignation

A letter of resignation is written to convey the news of leaving a job to their immediate superior giving him notice and the reason for leaving. Below is the fine list of elements of a good resignation letter just to keep you afloat with your next quest in career-making. Clearly, outline specific accomplishments with your current employer. This is important so as to bring on board the importance of your existence within that firm for the days you had served there and it will also leave an indelible achievement of records.

Do not leave any criticism of your current employer. Do not be duped in writing anything even close to constructive criticism. This is because very few employers would like to learn from their mistakes and they are adamant of any change to corrections. It is important to give your employer a customary two-week prior notice on your plans to disengage with them. Finally, ensure that you deliver the resignation letter by yourself with some five to ten minutes of a smile and best of

luck wishes. Make sure that in the first few minutes you are swift to reply positively to any questions posed to you.

To get started, here are areas that you should focus on:

- Have a friendly opening tone- aim at keeping an amicable but professional tone. **Example:** Start the letter with the word "Dear'' followed by their surname.
- Vividly state the reasons for your resignation.
- Provide a proper notice- this maybe like two weeks so that they can seek for your replacement.
- State your reason for leaving the firm- this is optional depending on an individual.
- It is also good to state that you are more than willing to help out on duties within the time frame before the end of your engagement.
- You should thank the employer for the engagement provided to you.

9.5 APPLICATION WRITING

Application writing is another important skill that is written for various purposes. Basically, there are two types of applications, for example:

- Solicited Applications
- Un-solicited Applications

9.5.1 Solicited Applications

These are the applications that are written in response to advertisements. We know that vacant positions are advertised in English and Urdu dailies, in magazines, and through the internet. The requirements are mentioned in the given ads. These applications may be detailed or less detailed. But a large number of candidates apply for the advertised posts across the country. So, the chances of competition are far greater than the applications written as un-solicited.

9.5.2 Un-Solicited Applications

These applications are written for jobs as a result of personal information about a vacant post. In this way, the chances of the potential candidates applied for these posts are rare because only a few people can know about these posts. So, these applications should be detailed with the reason that the requirements of any post are not mentioned anywhere.

9.5.3 How to Write a Job Application?

This is a very important question as how a job application should be written. In this respect, it is important to determine which type of application someone is going to write. If it is the un-solicited application, then no source is mentioned through which the candidate has got the information about the vacant post. On the other hand, in solicited applications, the source is mentioned in the beginning which may be mostly the newspaper. Then the candidate has to mention the relevance of his qualification, experience, age, interest and enthusiasm to work in that organization. He/she should write it so impressively that the recruitment officer should be convinced to appoint the applicant for that position.

9.5.4 Planning the Resume

Your resume is a one-page (sometimes two-page) document that summarizes your skills, experiences and qualifications for a position in your field. Plan it carefully, selecting the most pertinent information and choosing a readable format.

(i) Information to be Included in a Resume

The information to be included in a resume is that which fills the employer's needs. Most of the employers expect the following information to appear on applicants' resumes:

Personal information: Name, address and phone number,

- Educational information: Degree, name of college, major and date of graduation,
- Work History: Titles of jobs held, employing companies, dates of employment, duties and a career objective, and
- Achievements: Grade point average, awards and honors, special aptitudes and skills, and achievements at work (such as contributions and accomplishments).

(ii) Resume Organization

Traditionally, the information required on a resume has usually been arranged in chronological order, emphasizing job duties. Because employers are accustomed to this order; they know exactly where to find the information they need and can focus easily on your positions and accomplishments.

The chronological resume has the following sections:

- Personal data,
- Career objectives,
- Summary (optional),
- Education and
- Work experience.

(a) Personal Data

The personal data consists of name, address, telephone number (always found at the top of the page), place to contact for credentials, willingness to relocate, honors and activities (usually found at the bottom of the page). If appropriate add an e-mail address and personal website URL. List your current address and phone number. Tell employers how to acquire credentials and letters of reference. If you have letters in a placement file at your college career services office, give the appropriate address and phone numbers. If you do not have a file, indicate that you can provide names on the request. Federal regulations specify that you do not need to mention your birth date, height, weight, health or marital status. However, you may give information on hobbies and interests. They reveal something about you as a person, and they provide topics of conversation at a surprising number of interviews.

(b) Career Objectives

The career objective state the type of position you are seeking or what you can bring to the company. A well-written objective reads like this: "Management Consulting Position in Information Systems" or "Position in Research and Development in Microchip Electronics" or "To use my programming, testing, and analysis skills in an information systems position".

(c) Summary

The summary, an optional section, emphasizes essential points for your reader (Parker, Year?). In effect, it is a mini-resume. List key items of your professional experience, credentials, one or two accomplishments and one or two your skills. If you do not have room for the summary in the resume, consider putting it into your accompanying letter.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Strong operations and client relationship management background with proven expertise in leading an operations team for a multimillion-dollar retail organization. Well-developed customer relations skills that build lasting clients loyally. Proven new business development clue to the excellent prospecting and client rapport building skills. Able to develop processes that increase productivity, profitability and employee longevity.

(d) Education

The education section includes pertinent information about your degrees. List your college or university, the years you attended it, and your major, minor, concentration and grade points average (if good). If you attended more than one school, present them in reverse chronological order, the most recent one at the top.

You can also list relevant courses (many employers like to see technical writing in the list), honors and awards, extracurricular activities, descriptions of practicums, co-ops and internships. You do not need to include your high school.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, University of Wisconsin Stout, May 2002. Major: Food Systems and Technology; Emphasis: Food Science, Minor: Chemistry

Associate of Applied Science Degree, Georgia Military College, Brunswick, Georgia, 1995.

ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Phi Theta Kappa--International Honor: Society of the Two Year College Academic National Honor Society.

(e) Work Experience

The work experience section includes the positions you have held that are relevant to your field of interest. List your jobs in reverse chronological order—the most recent one at first. In some cases, you might alter the arrangement to reflect the importance of the experience. For example, if you first held a relevant eight-month internship, and then took a job as a dishwasher, when you returned to school, list the internship first. Enlist all of the full-time jobs and relevant part-time jobs—as far back as the summer after your senior year in high school. You do not need to include every part-time job, just the important ones (but be prepared to give complete names and dates). Each work experience entry should have four items: Job title, job description, name of the company and dates of employment. These four items can be arranged in several ways, as the following examples show. However, the job description is the most important part of the entry. Describe your duties, the projects you worked on, and the machines and processes you used. Choose the details according to your sense of what the reader needs.

Write the job description in the past tense, using "action" words such as managed and developed. Try to create pictures in the reader's mind (Parker, Year?). Give Job Title, Company details, Duties and accomplishments specifics that he or she can relate to. Arrange the items in the description in order of importance. Put the important skills first of all. The following example illustrates a common arrangement of the four items in the entry:

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Sales/Marketing Director, Information Services Group, LLC, Milwaukee, WI, 2000-2001.
- Established client database that led to the strong relationships with key accounts.
- Extensive coordination in overall advertising including writing, proofreading, detail organization, layouts, designs and productions.
- Personally responsible for several major accounts, doubling sales revenues for the fiscal year 2000. Developed new accounts due to the excellent prospecting and follow-through abilities.
- Extensive telemarketing, cold calls and sales presentations.
- Organized, developed and implemented new employee handbook; responsible for material and design.

(f) Order of Entries on the Page

In the chronological resume, the top of any section is the most visible position, so you should put the most important information there: Place your name, address, and career objective at the top of the page. In general, the education section comes next, followed by the work section. However, if you have had a relevant internship or full-time experience, put the work section first in a chronological resume.

9.6 WRITING THE RESUME

Drafting your resume includes generating, revising and finishing it. Experiment with content and format choices. Ask a knowledgeable person to review your drafts for wording and emphasis. Pay close attention to the finishing stage, in which you check the consistency of presentation and spelling.

The resume must be easy to read. Employers are looking for essential information and they must be able to find it on the first reading. In this regard, follow the following tips:

- Usually, limit the resume to one page.
- Indicate the main divisions at the far left margins. Usually, boldface heads announce the major sections of the resume.
- Boldface important words such as job titles or names of majors; use underlining sparingly. Use bulleted lists, which emphasize individual lines effectively.
- Single-space entries, and double-space above and below. The resulting White space makes the page easier to read.

- Control the margins and type size. Make the left margin 1 inch wide.
- Use a 10- or 12-point type.
- Treat items in each section consistently. All the job titles, for example, should be in the same relative space and in the same typeface and size.
- Print resumes on good-quality paper; use black ink on light paper (white or off-white). Avoid brightly colored paper, which has a little positive effect on employers and have photocopies poorly printed.
- Consider using a resume software program. Actually a database, it provides spaces for you to fill with appropriate data and offers several designs for formatting the page.

Michelle L. Stewart
2837 Main Street (715) 421-8765
EauClaire, WI54701
michstew27@yahoo.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE
To obtain a position in the food industry as a Consumer Scientist.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
Strong operations and client relationship management background with proven expertise in leading an operations team for a multimillion-dollar retail organization. Well-developed customer relations skills that build lasting client loyalty. Proven new business development due to excellent prospecting and client rapport building skills. Able to develop processes that increase productivity, profitability and employee longevity.

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Science Degree, University of Wisconsin—Stout, May 2002; Major: Food Systems and Technology; Emphasis: Food Science Minor: Chemistry Associate of Applied Science Degree, Georgia Military College, Brunswick, Georgia 1995.

ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Phi Theta Kappa—International Honour Society of the Two Year College Academic National Honour Society

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Sales/Marketing Director, Information Services Group, LLC, Milwaukee, WI 2000-2001:

Established client database that led to strong relationships with key accounts. Extensive coordination in overall advertising including writing, proof-reading, detail organization, layouts, designs and productions. Personally responsible for several major accounts and doubling sales revenue for the fiscal year 2000. Developed new accounts due to excellent prospecting and follow-through abilities.

Extensive telemarketing, cold calls and sales presentations - Organized, developed, and implemented new employee handbook; responsible for material and design.

Sales Professional, IKON Technology Services, and Milwaukee, WI 1999-2000: Responsible for maintaining client relationships with several key business accounts. Coordinated delivery of products and services to ensure on-time completion of projects.

Operations/Merchandise Manager, Best Buy Co., Inc., Madison, WI 1997-1999: Managed the daily processes of operations team including development for three-person staff, flow delegation, implementation of new systems, processing of all transactions and effective cost management.

Managed major departmental merchandising reorganizations according to company standards.

Created new performance standards and assessment tools that ranked employee performance and provided training and employee coaching to help employees meet new goals.

Primarily responsible for scheduling staff of 1Q5+ and maintaining monthly labour budgets based on sales volume/store performance/job functions resulting in improved productivity. Trained staff on company procedures to increase their ability to provide excellent customer service resulting in an increase in team morale, customer loyalty and profitability. Coordinated human resource activities including hiring, training, performance evaluations and team development.

Administered employee benefits, compensation and payroll; mediated employee legal conflict/disputes; and dealt with employee terminations.

Developed new processes to reduce controllable expenses, resulting in an increase in net profit.

RELATED EXPERIENCE
Front End Operations Manager, Sam's Club, Madison, WI 1996-1997: Pharmacy Department Manager, Wal-Mart Corporation, St. Mary's, GA 1992-1996.

Figure 9.8: Sample Resume

9.6.1 Electronic Resume

Electronic resumes are changing the job search. The candidate still submits a resume, and they, the player still reads it; but the "electronic way" has a key difference technology intervenes to do much of the initial sorting. As a result, "keyword strategies" are very important. This section explains briefly how the sorting works, keyword strategies, online, scannable, and ASCII resumes.

(i) How the Sorting Works

Using one of the methods explained below, the candidate submits a resume that, because it is electronic, is put into a searchable database. When an employer wants to find candidates to interview, he or she searches the database with a software program that seeks those keywords that the employer says are important. For example, the employer might want someone who can design websites and who knows Dreamweaver and HTML programming. Every time the search program finds a resume with those words in it; it pulls the resume into an electronic "yes" pile, which the human beings can then read.

Gonyea and Gonyea (Year?) explain the process this way: "If the computer finds the same word or words [that describe the candidate, the company is attempting to find) anywhere in your resume, it considers your resume to be a match, and will then present your resume, along with the others that are also considered to be a match, to the person doing the searching"

Thus, your use of effective keywords is the key to filling out such a form. As Gonyea and Gonyea (Year?) say, "To ensure that your resume will be found, it is imperative that you include as many of the appropriate search words as are likely to be used by employers and recruiters who are looking for someone with your qualifications" (P. No?).

(ii) Keyword Strategies

Keywords require a radical change in presenting your resume. Your odds of being one of the "hits" in the search are increased by including a lot of keywords in your resume. In addition to using key-words as you describe yourself in the education and work history sections of your resume, you should also include a keyword section right in your resume. Some of the major online resume services, such as Monster.com, require you to add one.

Put the keyword section either at the first or at the last in your resume, or in the box supplied by the resume service. Use words that explain skills or list aspects of a job. The list should include mostly nouns of the terms that an employer would use to determine, if you could fill his or her need—job titles, specific job duties, specific

machines or software programs, degrees, major and subjective skills, such as communication abilities. You can include synonyms; for instance, in the list below, Web design and Dream Weaver are fairly close in meanings, because you use one to do the other, but including both increases your chances of the scanner's choosing your resume.

A shortlist might look like this:
C++, software engineering, HTML, programmer, needs analysis, client interview, team, Web Design, Photoshop and design requirements.

Remember, the more “hits" the reading software makes in this list, the more likely that your resume will be sent on to the appropriate department.

(iii) On-Line Resumes/Job Searches

The Web has dramatically changed the methods of advertising jobs and responding to advertisements. Job-posting sites allow employers to post employment opportunities; resume-posting sites allow candidates to post their information. The exact way in which sites work varies, but all of them work in one of two ways. On job-posting sites, like America's Job Bank, employers post ads, listing job duties and candidate qualifications, and candidates respond to those ads. On resume-posting sites, like Monster. Com, candidates post resumes in Web-based databases, and employers search them for viable applicants. You have two options. You can begin to read the "Web want ads," and you can post your resume. "Web Want Ads" are posted at the job-posting site. For instance, America's Job Bank <www.ajb .dni".us> lists job notices posted by state employment offices, and Internet Career Connection: Help Wanted-USA <http://iccweb.corn/IlelpWantedUSA/ hwusa.asp> posts ads for companies around the world in all lines of work. You simply access the site and begin to read. In addition, many of the resume-posting services have a 'want ad site’. For instance, Monster.com <www.monster.com> has an extensive listing of jobs in all categories. In all of these sites, job seekers can search by city, by job type, by the level of authority (entry-level, manager and executive). Candidates can search free of charges, but companies pay the sites to post the ads.

(iv) Post your Resume

Many sites provide this service; usually, it is free. Each site has you create your resume at the site. You open an account and then fill in the form that the site presents to you. For instance, you will be asked for personal information (e.g., name and address) and also such typical items as job objective, work experience, desired job, desired salary and Special Skills. Usually, filling out the form takes about 30 minutes. The site creates a standard-looking format, which is sent to prospective employers, when they ask for it.

(v) Scannable Resume

Many companies use optical character recognition (OCR) software (McNair; Quible) to scan resumes. First, paper resumes are scanned, turning them into ASCII files, which are entered into a database. Second, when an opening arises, the human resources department searches the database for keywords. The resumes that contain the most keywords are forwarded to the people, who will decide whom to interview. This development means that job seekers must now be able to write resumes that are scannable and that effectively use keywords. Scannable resumes are less sophisticated looking than the traditional ones because scanners simply cannot render traditional resumes correctly. These documents contain all the same sections as traditional resumes but present them differently:

- Use one column. Many scanners scramble two-column text. Start all heads and text at the same left-hand margin.
- Use 10- to 14-point fonts. For "fine" fonts like Times and Palatino; use 11 to 12 points; for "thick" fonts like New Century Schoolbook, use 10 or 11 points. For heads, use 12 to 14 points.
- Use the same font throughout the document. Place your.name and address at the top of the page, centered one. If you include two addresses (campus and home), place them under each other.
- Avoid italics, underlining, and vertical lines. Do not fold your resume. Mail it in an envelope that will hold the 8 1/2-by-11-inch page.

(vi) ASCU Resumes

Often companies ask you to send your resume by e-mail. The best way to do so is to send the resume as an ASCII file, one that contains only letters, numbers and a few punctuation marks but does not contain formatting such devices as boldfacing and italics (Skarzenski, 1996). Like scannable resumes, ASCII resumes maintain all the traditional sections; you just present them so that they will interact smoothly with whatever software program is receiving them.

The key items to be aware of are:

- Keep the line length, to fewer than 65 characters.
- Some software systems have difficulty with longer lines.
- Use spaces, not tabs. Some software programs misinterpret tabs.
- Send the file to the receiver in two ways. You can send a file as part of an e-mail message or as an attachment to an e-mail message. Some programs can read the message both ways, some only one way. If the recipient's program does not have the capabilities, it will not be able to read your message.
- To practice sending an ASCII file with your e-mail program, send-yourself, and a friend your resume. You and the friend should be able to print out the resume easily.

9.6.2 Ethics and Resumes

In writing a resume, you want to engender confidence in your abilities and avoid either underselling or overselling your experience. Recruiters are often looking through scores of resumes in search of measurable accomplishments that sound relevant for the position being filled. Using creative words to enhance the sound of an otherwise a mundane job may result in your resume being passed over, as the manager spends extra seconds trying to decipher the hidden meanings. What you say about your experience should be defensible and logical, and can be creative but not outlandish. The resume that honestly and straightforwardly presents the candidate's experience with a positive spin has the best chance of being read and landing you an interview. For example, stretching dates of employment to cover a jobless period is lying and can cost you the offer or get you fired later on. Saying that you "specialized in retail sales and assisted in a 10 percent increase in sales at the store- level," when you worked at the local video store and the store saw a 10 percent increase in sales is embellishing but is not a lie. Claiming that you were store manager, when you were not is lying. Resume padding, telling lies on resumes, is becoming more and more common. Lying about experience or accomplishments on a resume is risky. Resume padding may get you a job for the short term, if the employer hiring you does not check your resume carefully, but resume padding can come back to haunt you later on (Callahan, 1996). Inventing experiences, educational degrees and accomplishments shouldn't be done due to the damage it can cause the writer down the road, even if the writer does not have a moral problem with lying. False information on your resume sits like a land mine waiting to explode (Callahan, Year?). In the recent past, lies on resumes ruined prestigious and lengthy careers. Companies have fired successful CEOs upon discovering they had misrepresented university credentials (Callahan,1996). When share prices plummet, as a result, investors may even sue the CEO for fraud. An otherwise stellar career that may never have needed a made-up degree can be brought to an unceremonious and humiliating end. Being a candidate without a master's degree or with a gap in employment is not out of the ordinary. Being a candidate who got caught stretching dates of employment to cover gaps or inventing a degree that never existed is inexcusable, ruinous and unethical (Callahan; Truesdell, Year?).

9.7 PLANNING A LETTER OF APPLICATION

The goal of sending a letter of application is to be invited to an interview. To write an effective letter of application, understand the employer's needs, which are expressed in an ad or a job description. Planning a specific letter requires you to

analyze the ad or description and match the stated requirements with your skills. For the said purpose follow the following:

- **Analyze the Employer's Needs**
  To discover an employer's needs, analyze the ad, or analyze typical needs for this kind of position. To analyze an ad, read it for key terms. For instance, a typical ad could read, "Candidates need 1+ years of C++. Communication skills are required. Must have systems analysis skills." The key requirements here are 1+ years of C++, communication skills, and systems analysis. If you do not have an ad, analyze typical needs for this type of job. A candidate for a manufacturing engineer position could select pertinent items from the list of responsibilities printed in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

- **Match Your Capabilities to the Employer's Needs**
  The whole point of the letter is to show employers that you will satisfy their needs. If they say they need 1+ years of C++, tell them you have it. As you match needs with capabilities, you will develop a list of items to place in your letter. You need not include them all; discuss the most important or interesting ones.

9.7.1 Writing a Letter of Application

- The letter of application, also known as a cover letter, explains to the employer why you are qualified for the position in which you are applying and why you should be selected for an interview. A letter of application should complement, not duplicate, your resume. Its purpose is to interpret the resume and add a personal touch. The letter of application is often your earliest written contact with a potential employer, creating a critical first impression. That first glance at your letter of application is your one opportunity to make a good impression and make it to the next round in the search process.

- In order to pass that first round of screening, you must specifically address the job posting and state why you are qualified for the position. This way, the search committee can see at a glance, why and how you are qualified for the job. The letter of application responds to a known job opening and should express a high level of interest and knowledge about the position. Effective letters of application explain the reasons for your interest in the specific job position and identify your most relevant skills or experiences.

- Your letter of application should be designed specifically for each position you seek. Do not design a form letter and send it to every potential employer. Although it can be time-consuming to write a custom letter of application for

each job, it is important to take the time and effort to show why you are a good match. To write a custom letter of application, take the job posting, and list the criteria the employer is looking for. Then list the skills and experience you have. Either addresses how your skills match the job in paragraph form or list the criteria and your qualifications.

- Writing a letter of application can seem like a challenging task. However, if you take it one step at a time, you will soon be an expert at writing letters of application to send with your application packet. Here is information on how to write letters of application, along with letters of application samples and examples.

9.7.2 Letter of Application Guidelines

- **Font**
  Use a traditional font such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri. The font size should between 10 and 12 points.

- **Format**
  A letter of application should be single-spaced with a space between each paragraph. Use about 1" margins and align your text to the left, which is the standard alignment for most documents.

- **Length**
  A letter of application should be about one-page long.

9.7.3 Letter of Application Organization

- **Header**
  A letter of application should begin with both your and the employer's contact information followed by the date. If you have contact information for the employer, list it below your contact information. If not, leave this section off your letter.

- **Contact Information**
  The first section of a letter of application should include your contact information:
  - Your Name
  - Your Address
  - Your City, State and Zip Code
  - Your Cell Phone or Home Number
  - Your Email Address (optional)

- **Salutation**
  Follow the salutation with a colon, space and then start the first paragraph of your letter. For example:
  Dear Search Committee
  (First paragraph of the letter)

  The following is a list of letter salutation examples that are appropriate for letters of application and the other employment-related correspondence. Following is the general salutations for cover letters:
  - Dear Hiring Manager
  - Dear Search Committee
  - To whom it may concern
  - Dear Human Resources Manager
  - Dear Sir or Madam

- **Introductory Paragraph**
  Begin by stating the job for which you are applying. Briefly mention how your skills and experience match the company and/or position; this will give the employer a preview of the rest of your letter.

- **Body Paragraph(s)**
  In a paragraph or two, explain why you are interested in the job and why you make an excellent candidate for the position. Mention specific qualifications listed in the job posting and explain how you meet those qualifications. Do not simply restate your resume, but provide specific examples. You can either write about these specific examples in complete sentences or in a bulleted format. It is better to use shorter paragraphs or a bulleted list of your qualifications rather than one large block of text.

- **Closing Paragraph**
  Conclude your letter of application by thanking the employer for considering you for the position and state that you would like to be interviewed and/or discuss employment opportunities. The following is a list of letter closing examples that are appropriate for letters of application and employment-related correspondence:
  - Sincerely
  - Sincerely yours
  - Regards
  - Best regards
  - Kind regards

- Yours truly
- Most sincerely
- Respectfully
- Respectfully yours
- Thank you
- Thank you for your consideration.

Follow the closing with a comma, four spaces and then your typed name. For example:
Best regards,
Your Name

- **Signature**
  Lastly, sign your name between the closing and your typed name.

  Remember to proof read and edit your letter before sending it.

9.8 GLOBALIZATION AND JOB APPLICATIONS

Applying for a job overseas may open the way for an exciting professional and personal adventure. Understanding how to reformat your resume to fit the needs of your potential employers will make the process faster and easier.

The term curriculum vitae (CV) is often used in the other countries. A CV is generally the same as a resume—a document detailing your education and work experience. However, different countries, employers and cultures call for different areas of information and different levels of detail. Most countries have specific formats that they find acceptable. If you are unsure about which format you should use, ask; or use the standard, reverse-chronological format—put the most recent job at the highest in the list and work backward. Many countries expect information on resumes and CVs considered unprofessional or illegal in the United States: Date of birth, marital status, and nationality ("Resumés").

When applying to a Japanese company, you may submit either a two-page, standard format resume in Japanese, called a rirekisho, or a cover letter and resume in English. Center your name and contact information at the top of the page and begin your resume with a summary of your major qualifications. Your next section will be Employment Experience followed by Education. Finally, you will end your resume with personal Information—Date of birth, marital status, and nationality.

If you are interested in working and living in the United Kingdom, you will format your resume a bit differently. Include a cover letter addressed to a specific person. Your resume will start with your personal information: Name, contact information, date of birth, marital status and nationality. Three major sections follow. The Profile section describes your professional designation, your immediate ambitions and in bulleted list form, your relevant skills and work-related achievements. Your Employment History section begins with your current position and then provides the name, location, and focus of the companies you have worked for. In the Education section, list your schools in reverse chronological order and include degrees awarded, additional courses and training and any special skills (Thompson, Year?).

If you do write your resume in the language of the country to which you are applying, find a native speaker of the language to review it. If it is written in a language other than English, one of your goals is to show that you are familiar with culturally appropriate language. Furthermore, if you e-mail your resume, keep in mind that the American standard paper size is 81/2 by 11 inches; whereas, the European A4 standard is 210-297 mm. Be sure to reformat your document in your word processing program for those parameters to ensure that the receiver does not lose any of your information.

9.9 INTERVIEWING

A **job interview** is an interview consisting of a conversation between a job applicant and a representative of an employer, which is conducted to assess whether the applicant should be hired or not. Interviews are one of the most popularly used devices for employee selection. Interviews vary in the extent to which the questions are structured, from a totally unstructured and free-wheeling conversation to a structured interview in which an applicant is asked a predetermined list of questions in a specified order. Structured interviews are usually more accurate predictors of which applicants will make suitable employees, according to research studies.

A job interview typically precedes the hiring decision. The interview is usually preceded by the evaluation of submitted resumes from interested candidates, possibly by examining job applications or reading many resumes. Next, after this screening, a small number of candidates for interviews are selected. Potential job interview opportunities also include networking events and career fairs. The job interview is considered one of the most useful tools for evaluating potential employees. It also demands significant resources from the employer, yet has been demonstrated to be notoriously unreliable in identifying the optimal person for the

job. An interview also allows the candidate to assess the corporate culture and demands of the job.

Multiple rounds of job interview and/or the other candidate selection methods may be used where there are many candidates or the job is particularly challenging or desirable. Earlier rounds sometimes called 'screening interviews' may involve less staff from the employers and will typically be much shorter and less in-depth. An increasingly common initial interview approach is the telephone interview. This is especially common when the candidates do not live near the employer and have the advantage of keeping costs low for both sides. Since 2003, interviews have been held through video conferencing software, such as Skype. Once all candidates have been interviewed, the employer typically selects the most desirable candidate(s) and begins the negotiation for a job offer.

9.9.1 Types

There are many types of interviews that organizations can conduct. What is the same across all interview types, however, is the idea of the interview structure? How much an interview is structured, or developed and conducted the same way across all of the applicants, depends on the number of certain elements included in that interview. Overall, the interview can be standardized both with regard to the content (i.e., what questions are asked) and to the evaluative process (i.e., how the applicants' responses to the questions are scored). When an interview is standardized, it increases the likelihood that an interviewee's ratings are due to the quality of his/her responses instead of non-job-related and often distracting factors, such as appearance. Interview structure is more appropriately thought to be on a continuum, ranging from completely unstructured to fully structured. However, the structure is often treated as having only two categories (that is, structured vs. unstructured), which many researchers believe to be too simple of an approach.

(i) Unstructured Interviews

The unstructured interview, or one that does not include a good number of standardization elements, is the most common form of the interview today. Unstructured interviews are typically seen as free-flowing; the interviewer can swap out or change questions as he/she feels is the best, and different interviewers may not rate or score applicant responses in the same way. There are also no directions put in place regarding how the interviewer and the interviewee should interact before, during or after the interview. Unstructured interviews essentially allow the interviewer to conduct the interview; however, he or she thinks is the best. Given unstructured interviews can change based on who the interviewer might be, it is not surprising that unstructured interviews are typically preferred by interviewers. Interviewers tend to develop confidence in their ability to accurately rate interviewees, detect whether

applicants are faking their answers and trust their judgment about whether the person is a good candidate for the job or not. Unstructured interviews allow interviewers to do so more freely. Research suggests, however, that unstructured interviews are actually highly unreliable, or inconsistent between interviews. That means that two interviewers who conduct an interview with the same person may not agree and see the candidate the same way even if they were in the same interview with that applicant. Often interviewers, who conduct unstructured interviews, fail to identify the high-quality candidates for the job.

Figure 9.9: What are Unstructured Interviews?
Advantages, Characteristics & Steps/Marketing91

(ii) Structured Interviews

Interview structure is the degree to which interviews are identical and conducted the same across the applicants. Also known as guided, systematic or patterned interviews, structured interviews aim to make both the content (the information addressed as well as the administration of the interaction) and the evaluation (how the applicant is scored) the same no matter what applicant is being interviewed. An interview's degree of structure is often thought of as the extent to which these elements are included when conducting interviews.

9.9.2 How to Prepare for a Job Interview

According to Alison Czinkota there are a number of steps you can take before (and after) the interview to ensure that you make a terrific impression on your potential employer. Taking the time to prepare for an interview in advance can help you secure a job offer. Here is how to research the job and company, how to practice interview questions and answers, how to dress for the interview, how to follow up after the interview and more interview preparation tips.

Figure 9.10: How to Prepare for a job interview? / CV & Resume Writing

(i) Analyze the Job

An important part of interview preparation is to take the time to analyze the job posting, if you have it. As you review the job description, consider what the company is seeking in a candidate. Make a list of the skills, knowledge, professional and personal qualities that are required by the employer and are critical for success in the job.

(ii) Make a Match

Once you have created a list of the qualifications for the job, make a list of your assets and match them to the job requirements. Create a list of up to 10 of your assets that match the requirements of the job. These might include skills, qualities, certifications, experiences, professional qualifications, abilities, computer skills and knowledge bases. You can bring up some of these assets, when you explain to the employer why you are a great fit for the job.

Also, think of examples from the past work experiences that show you have these qualities. This way, if the interviewer asks you to describe a time, when you demonstrated a particular skill or ability, you will be ready. Review the job requirements, your list of assets and your examples prior to the interview so that you are prepared to share them during the interview. This preparation will help you to be ready to answer job-specific interview questions and behavioral interview questions designed to determine, if you have the knowledge, skills and qualities needed to perform the job.

(iii) Research the Company

Before you go on a job interview, it is important to find out as much as you can about not only the job but also the company. Company research is a critical part of interview preparation. It will help you prepare to answer interview questions about the company and to ask the interviewer questions about the company. You will also be able to find out whether the company and the company culture are a good fit for you. For a concise understanding of the company, check out the company website specifically the "About Us" page. Get a sense of how the company compares to the other organizations in the same industry by reading articles about the company in industry magazines or websites. You can also check out company reviews from clients and current and former employees. Also, spend time tapping into your network to see if you know someone, who can help give you an interview edge over the other candidates.

(iv) Practice Interviewing

Take the time to practice answering interview questions you will probably be asked during a job interview. This will help give you a chance to prepare and practice answers and will also help calm your nerves because you will not be scrambling for an answer while you are in the interview hot seat. Practice interviewing with a friend or family member ahead of time and it will be much easier when you are actually in a job interview.

Try to conduct the practice interview in the same format as the real interview. For example, if it is a phone interview, ask a friend to call you to practice answering questions over the phone. If it is a panel interview, ask a couple of friends to pretend to be a panel. Review common job interview questions and answers, and think about how you will respond so you are prepared to answer.

(v) Get Your Interview Clothes Ready

Do not wait until the last minute to make sure your interview clothes are ready. Have an interview outfit ready to wear at all the times, so you do not have to think about what you are going to wear while you are scrambling to get ready for a job interview. Regardless of the type of job you are interviewing for, that first impression should be a great one. When dressing for an interview for a professional position, dress accordingly in business attire. If you are applying for a job in a more casual environment, such as a store or restaurant, it is still important to be neat, tidy, well-groomed and to present a positive image to the employer. It is also important to think about your makeup and accessories when dressing for an interview.

(vi) Decide What to Do With Your Hair

How you style your hair for a job interview is almost as important as the interview clothes you wear. After all, the interviewer is going to notice everything about you including your interview attire, hairstyle and makeup, and you only have seconds to make a great impression. Search hairstyles for short, medium and long hair for inspiration for what to do with your hair when you are going to be interviewed.

(vii) What to Bring to a Job Interview

It is important to know what to bring (and what not to bring) to a job interview. Items to bring include a portfolio with extra copies of your resume, a list of references, a list of questions to ask the interviewer and something to write with. It is also important to know what *not* to bring, including your cellphone (or at least turn your phone off), a cup of coffee, gum or anything else beyond yourself and your credentials.

(viii) Practice Interview Etiquette

Proper interview etiquette is important. Remember to greet the receptionist, your interviewer and everyone else you meet politely, pleasantly and enthusiastically. During the interview watch your body language; shake hands firmly and make eye contact as you articulate your points. Pay attention, be attentive and look interested. This is something you can work on in your practice interviews. There are also specific etiquette tips depending on the type of interview you have, for example, a lunch or dinner interview, a panel interview, a phone interview or a video interview. The more positive an impression you make, the better you will do during the job interview. These job interview etiquette tips will help you make the best impression on the hiring manager.

(ix) Get Directions

It is important to know where you need to go for your job interview – ahead of time. That way, you will avoid running late to the interview. Use Google Maps or another app to get directions, if you are not sure where you are going. Program your GPS, if you have one, so that you can find the best route to the company. Check on parking, if it is an issue. If you have the time, it is a good idea to do a practice run a day or two before the interview. That way, you will be sure about where you going and how long it will take to get there. Give yourself a few extra minutes and arrive a little early for the interview. You also may want to confirm the interview time and place; just to be sure you are heading in the right direction.

(x) Listen and Ask Questions

During a job interview listening is just as important as answering questions. If you are not paying attention, you are not going to be able to give a good response. It is important to listen to the interviewer, pay attention and take time, if you need it to compose an appropriate answer. It is also important to discuss your qualifications in a way that will impress the interviewer. Also be ready to engage the interviewer. You want there to be a give and take in the conversation so you are building a relationship with the interviewer rather than just providing rote responses to the questions. Have questions of your own ready to ask the interviewer. Towards the end of the interview, let the recruiter know that you believe the job is an excellent fit and that you are highly interested. You will know if the interview went well, if it runs longer than 30 minutes, you discuss salary or you get an invitation for a second interview.

(xi) Follow Up with a Thank You Note

Follow up a job interview with a thank you note while reiterating your interest in the job. Consider you thank you letter as a follow-up "sales" letter. Restate why you want the job, what your qualifications are, how you might make significant contributions, and so on. This thank you letter is also the perfect opportunity to discuss anything of importance that your interviewer neglected to ask or that you neglected to answer as thoroughly or as well as you would have liked.

Exercises

Answer the following questions:

1. What do you understand by written communication?
2. What are the essential parts of a good business letter?
3. What are standard formats?
4. What particular things are included in the inside address?
5. Why is signature important in a formal document?
6. Define each type of a business letter mentioned in this unit.
7. Why is complaint letter written promptly?
8. What type of companies you know on the basis of their policies to entertain complaints?

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